

UP THE SEINE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

ANNA BOWMAN DODD

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UP THE SEINE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

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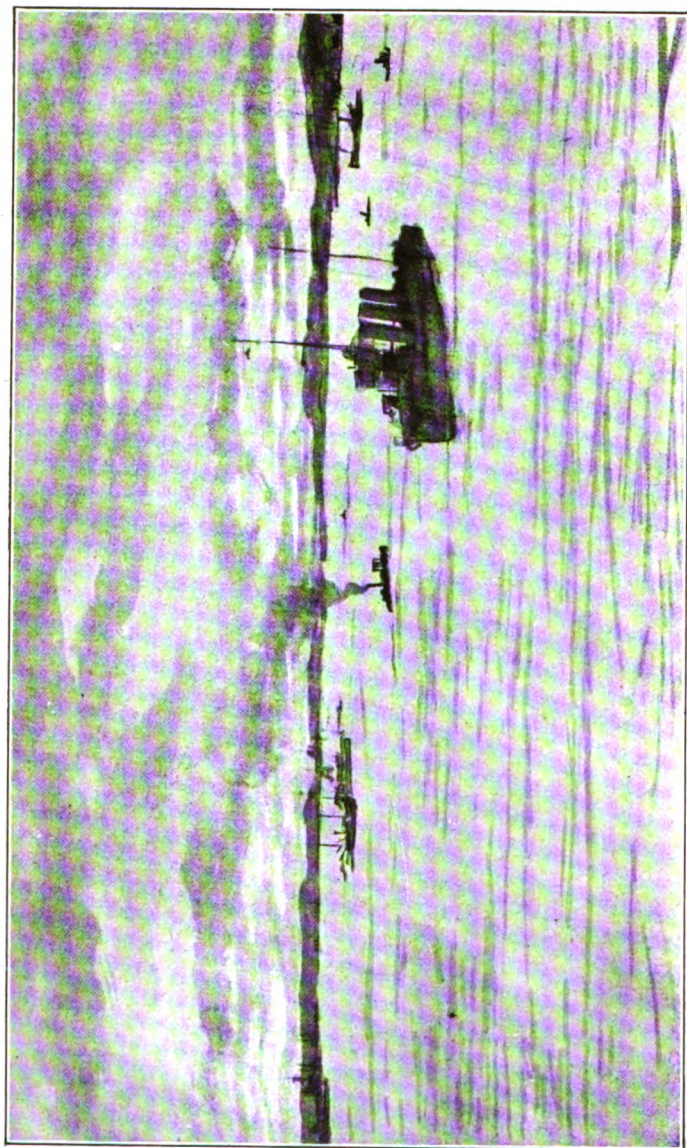
FALAISE: THE TOWN OF THE CONQUEROR

THE AMERICAN HUSBAND IN PARIS

IN AND OUT OF A FRENCH COUNTRY HOUSE

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HEROIC FRANCE



THE HARBOR OF HAVRE IN WAR-TIME

UP THE SEINE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

By
ANNA BOWMAN DODD

Author of
"THREE NORMANDY INNS" "PALAIS"
"HEROIC FRANCE" "ON THE KNEES OF THE GODS" ETC.

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UP THE SEDGE TO THE BATTLE-FIELDS

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UP THE SEINE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

INTRODUCTION

THE SEINE

I

OF this river—the river that crosses all France—whose shores are starred with great cities, whose waters have mirrored Gallic boats, Roman galleys, Norman fleets, English galleons, and, in our day, have harbored the world's ships that have saved the world—of this river of France, famed since before Cæsar looked out upon it through the silken curtains of his litter—how many soldiers, how many travelers know its true beauties?

The Seine is really the unknown river.

It is the Rhine rather than the Seine that tourists, hitherto, have felt impelled to traverse. We have all been brought up, indeed, to believe the Rhine was the true river of romance. Each castle we passed on this river the Germans call "Father Rhine" was the Lorelei that sang seductively of elves and fairies.

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Weird tales and legends haunted every rock and forest. In our later, more enlightened, day, the Rhine is now chiefly important as being no longer "Germany's river," but her enforced frontier.

From the point of view of its history, it has been said that "France is a person," and that in her geography she presents herself as a "Being." No-where will this sentient quality be as persistently felt as at this watery gateway of the Kingdom of Beauty we know as France.

Between the headlands of Cap de la Hève and of Sainte-Adresse that seem to protect the great northern port of France—Havre—and the opposite coast of lower Normandy—Calvados—there pours into the ever-changing waters of the capricious Channel the mouth of the Seine.

As though to present, at her very entrance gates, those striking contrasts which make France, geographically, a "being"—a being endowed with the complexity of genius—we find on the coast of Calvados, opposite modernized, commercialized Havre, the two pleasure towns of Trouville and Deauville; and not eight miles away, farther up along the river-mouth, the ancient town of Honfleur rises up amid her green hills as though to symbolize the hoary antiquity of France itself.

The immense arch of sky that spans these towns and the changeful mass of the commingling waters of sea and river give a grandeur to this gateway of France few countries present. And as there is a peculiar splendor in the breadth of this great ex-

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panse of waters, beneath the inverted cup of sky, it seems as though the mercurial qualities we discern in French character find their counterpart in this ever-changing, ever-alluring spectacle. As there is magnificence in the great outlook, so there is also gaiety, as infinite delicacy, and a suave charm in the tones and colors that light up the scene.

II

Why is it that not one traveler in a thousand, no, nor in tens of thousands has known the Seine shores as the shores of the Hudson are known—as the Rhine, for so many years, has been known and sung? Few Frenchmen even are fully aware of the wonders and beauties which a trip up the Seine will yield.

The reasons, it appears to me, are obvious.

At Havre, if you chance to land at that port, you are in haste to reach Paris. If you look out on the glittering waterway, you think of it chiefly as the Channel. It has, doubtless, never occurred to you to consider the great stretch of waters between Havre and the opposite Normandy coast as the gaping mouth of the Seine.

At Rouen, should you linger to see the architectural wonders of the famous city, the river, down along the docks, you find, looks commonplace, with its factory chimneys dimming the horizon. The quays are, indeed, full of interest, since the shipping lining the docks is proof of Rouen's being the second great port of northern France. But there is no talis-

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man to point the way to the wide-open river-spaces, to the towering cliffs, and to the châteaux-perched splendors that adorn the Seine shores.

If, in Paris, the Seine seems chiefly ornamental in that it runs under beautiful bridges, and useful since it takes one from Notre-Dame to Suresnes for a song, yet how can one have one's interest excited by a river, when a city as splendid as is Paris unrolls its glories, one by one? When Notre-Dame blocks one end of the horizon, and the semi-Moorish towers of the Trocadéro the other? When along the sky-line one sees outlined the Conciergerie, the stately Institut de France, the noble lines of the Louvre, and Le Grand and Le Petit Palais? And when all the old houses between are telling you of the horrors and the gaieties, the fêtes, and the revolutions they have survived?

Yet what a romance indeed of daring adventure, of sieges, of the pomp and pathos of dead kings floating down its waters to their last resting-place, of the safety sought by monarchs in flight, to gain its open port and harbors—what a long scroll of historic interest would you have found in this story of the Seine!

In the very birth of the river there are the elements of romance.

It is proof of that instinct for allying art to nature, of that pagan survival handed on through Roman occupation to Latinized France, that the river at its very source—in the remote hills the French poetically call La Côte-d'Or—the Golden Hillside—

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we should find the Seine emerging from the womb of Mother Earth, in that province Shakespeare called "waterish Burgundy," and emerging with a certain spectacular pomp. The Romans had found the source of the Seine, and had worshiped there their river nymph in a temple erected to their deity. Long ago temple and goddess were a part of the ruins of the ages.

In that remote corner of the Côte-d'Or, in a dense grove, however, there still trickles the slender stream. It formerly lost itself in a lap of verdure.

Napoleon III found this birth of the great river of too plebeian an aspect. During his reign a somewhat theatrical grotto was built. On the rock at the right there was placed a charming figure—a water-nymph. This modern figure, by Jouffroy, would be no water-sprite were she voluminously clothed. Gracefully reclining on her hard, rocky bed, in one hand this guardian of rivers holds an urn, from which trickles the rivulet. This slender streamlet is the Seine at its source. In her right hand the nymph uplifts a garland of fruits and flowers, as though to symbolize the abundant prosperity her waters are to lave.

Close to the statue are the ruins of the antique temple. The columns and statues lying about were formerly the decorative adjuncts of a shrine dedicated to the goddess Sequana, the Romans having carried to this remote corner of Gaul their traditions of identifying the forces of nature with their gods and goddesses.

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The centuries that have rolled on beneath the arches of time, between the erection of that pagan temple and the bustling, crowded, super-modern cities that line the Seine's shores have seen France itself develop from a Latinized Gaul to be the great citadel of civilization.

Great historic changes bring into the limelight of the world centers of interest hitherto neglected. Cities and countries deemed unimportant suddenly loom large.

During the war, discoveries were made of certain natural resources hitherto known, perhaps, but not utilized, in France, as in other countries.

Not only was the Seine found to be navigable for very large ships, as far as Rouen, thus making of that city a second great port of northern France, but the Seine shores suddenly revealed themselves as mines of wealth for industrial and commercial purposes. Its forests could furnish valuable timber for constructive purposes, as its quarries would yield inexhaustible material for factory usages. Deep river soundings proved the possibility of ship-building yards on a large scale. And thus, in four short years, behold the Seine emerging into the intensive modern commercial life of the nations as a battleground for competitive acquisition of its wealth-yielding sites and docks.

In a few short years, therefore, the Seine will no longer be the lovely river of beauty, with surprises at every turn for the exacting traveler. Towering hill slopes, historic châteaux, antique-faced

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towns and villages, set in a frame surprisingly wild, and forests of an almost primeval aspect—such are the unsuspected features this unknown inland river still can yield.

As the *scène-de-décors* of certain dramatic scenes in French history, the Seine has furnished the setting for some of the more tragic, as well as for certain pathetic episodes in France's checkered career.

In our day, when monarchs have had to seek safety in flight; when kingdoms and empires have crumbled as though at the touch of a magic-endowed, destructive hand; when revolution in as murderous and barbarous a form as the war waged by the Bolsheviki seems about to strangle in Russia the very liberties and freedom for which the Allies have fought—in our tragic day of stress and strain, it is well to recount again the stories of those kings and monarchs whose fortunes and fates have helped to mold France and also to precipitate the mighty drama of which we are a part.

Above all else, a voyage up the Seine yields to the most traveled tourist a new route, fresh sensations, novelties in scenic and in architectural splendors, as it also presents the delectable contrast of a prosperous France to her devastated regions.

CHAPTER I

HAVRE

I

AN immense arch of sky, the moving, illumined face of the waters, ships and fishing-boats gliding out of Havre's inner basin to the open sea, and transports alined like spectral sentinels in the roads were seen through the morning's haze.

The very air was still. The morning's quiet was broken only by the tooting of shrill whistles, by a fisherman's *rauque* cry, and by the squealing of sea-gulls, mounting, soaring, beating the air, others dipping straight down.

The morning sun was now gradually opening its mist-clouded eyes. Shrouded in those tinted veils, the morning had the white pallor of a timid bride. The risen sun might have been her torch-bearer. As the torch burned brighter the mist's transparencies were pierced

Havre's long lines of docks, quays, factories, and shipping were transfigured by the glow. The city wore iridescent tints

The great headland of Sainte-Adresse towered above seas and city. The sun-rays smote her breast,

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glorifying houses, villas, and her gay gardens. As Athenian lovers of the great Greek age hung garlands on the doors of those whose favors they craved, France, in this, her flower-decked headland, seems ever luring the sea with her Sainte-Adresse walls and terraces flinging their rose-petals out to the blue waters.

From the heights one looks down upon the glittering water-spaces of the Seine's wide channel that loses itself in English mists. The city at one's feet stretches on and on, its port, docks, quays, suburbs, its basins and ship-building yards carrying the eye on to its neighbor Harfleur, six kilometers away. Across the moving face of the waters, the undulating coast-line of the green Normandy hills dips and rises—a prospect such as only one other city in the world can rival, since we have Casimir Delavigne's outburst to emphasize the statement:

"Après Constantinople—il n'est rien d'aussi beau!"

The city of Havre, seen from the opposite Normandy coast, becomes a city of enchantment. It is as decorative in its contrasting and varying effects of color and tone as is Venice. It rises from the arms of its sea lover with the same effortless charm of a water-born city. It is luminous, iridescent; it disappears behind its mists as an Oriental woman masks herself in her veil; its long lines of light at night, stretching from her port entrance to Harfleur, are now like a necklace of star-gems worn by a water-queen, now delicate points of light piercing cloudy vestments of fog.

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The two great harbor lights stab the night, the one with its flashing crystal brilliance, the other with its upspringing crimson dart, as though each were in rivalry to outdo the other in some murderous attempt to conquer the darkness. And that unchanging, rhythmic beat, that mechanical pulse upon the night silence, is the sailor's silent guide to the haven below the hills.

Thousands and thousands of American and English soldiers, on landing at Havre, saw the city as we are now looking out upon it from the sea. They have caught their first glimpse of the land they had come to defend, as their ships came to anchor in these Havre roads. From across the ships' sides, how eagerly the quick-glancing soldiers' eyes have taken in that magnificent outlook!

The eyes of the men from New England, from Arkansas, from Nebraska, from adventurous California, as from England, Scotland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, and Algiers, have stretched beyond that green hill of Sainte-Adresse to fasten on the massed gray roofs, on the strange-faced French houses, and on the forest of ships' masts crowding Havre's inner docks as though this, their first French town, were to reveal to them the secret of the charm that had the magic to draw them to help defend her land and their own. How eager were the wide young eyes! What shouts and cries responded to the rapturous French greetings on shore! What quick, elastic pliability to new ways and to new methods of life and living were quickly

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proved by the heroes who were to help defeat the greatest military power ever known!

Those gray-faced houses leaning over Havre's quays became as familiar as those of their own homes. All the world, literally all the world, now knows those ancient, tatterdemalion houses as few others in France are known. Nearly every race of men peopling the earth has been staring at them, laughing at them, shouting as they first approached them, cheering as they saw them vanish into the dim distance. For as those gray faces retreated, visions of English homes, of American hearthstones, of India's brilliant-hued temples, and of Senegalese huts drew nearer.

II

Enter the city, and, like many another beauty seen at close quarters, Havre spells a certain disenchantment.

As one passes through the too narrow harbor entrance the first impression is, however, at once satisfying and exhilarating. This first French city bears the distinctive national, racial stamp. Its features are characteristically French.

The very colors of the fishing-smacks bobbing about on the undulating waters, the ocher-tinted or deep-crimson sails, the painted boats, the sailors' and fishermen's bérets and jerseys, the sunken wrecks (still weirdly striped with their camouflage bands of greens and blues) and the sea-going ships moored to the docks—make brilliant notes of contrasting effect.

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Above the quays, to the left, there is the pebbly, stony beach below the familiar white façade of Frascati's. Then comes the long line of Havre's most distinctive feature—that slanting, irregular line of its sagging, leaden-faced or painted houses. There are houses with blue blinds, houses with signs hanging crooked or with a string of frowzy heads craning down from a seventh- or eighth-story window.

It is on entering the city one experiences one's first disillusion.

The luminous effects seen from the water or from the Normandy coast are gone. Havre's narrow streets, her ill-kept pavements, her few imposing public buildings, her restricted residential quarter, and the squalor of her dark, reeking alleys are hardly relieved by the brilliant parterres of superb flowers in her public gardens, and by the brightness of her gaily decorated shops in her two fine boulevards.

It was to such a congested little city, its harbors already avowedly inadequate for pre-war shipping accommodations, that Havre awoke, in early August, to the startling surprise she was to be the chosen port for many of England's "first hundred thousand"—and for five long years thereafter for how many more millions of men, from all over the world, and for how many millions of tons of supplies and stores!

This is to be no war book—nor is it to be a war record. But no story of Havre, the Seine's great sea sentinel, would be complete without at least a

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cursory review of the prodigious effort made to meet the tremendous task her position as the first great port of northern France imposed upon her.

After the first stupor into which Havre was plunged by the gradually dawning knowledge she was to be the first great receiving center of thousands and thousands of overseas troops; that there were to be poured upon her docks tons and tons of stores of all sorts and kinds; that hundreds and hundreds of transports must be met in the roads; that camps must be built for soldiers of every race—and almost of every color, Havre awoke from her dazed state and proceeded to meet every demand upon her with a courage, an initiative, and a daring supposed to be peculiarly American traits.

The story of Havre during the great war has been told again and again. Few of her historians, however, have done full justice to the surprises she gave France, and the world in general, by her suddenly developed territorial expansion.

Cities began to grow about Havre with a rapidity as startling as was the diversity of their character.

One of these cities was the huge English camp at Harfleur, where soldiers, on landing at Havre, were immediately marched to their quarters, to the tents and barracks set in their frames of green. Recruits were trained on these Harfleur heights, and any day you could believe it was ancient Greece and not France in which you were living, as you looked on the graceful poses of men hurling hand-grenades

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with the same pose and gesture you may find sculptured in antique marble.

There was the more scattered city of the hospitals.

Casinos and hotels at Sainte-Adresse were requisitioned; and during all the long months of the great war men of every race and color were to be seen hanging across the wide balustrades of balconies, in their convalescent state. Under the stimulating sea air, under the quickening of the sun-rays, wounds quickly healed, and health became as contagious as disease.

There was also the Belgian city on these heights. Those charming little villas, built by Dufayel, the originator of this hillside as a residential quarter—contiguous to Havre—these villas that were nested in gardens, that terraced the hill slope—villas that seemed built solely to house love and lovers—were the homes of saddened Belgian statesmen. Here were housed all the diplomatic and official world from Brussels. Here on this Sainte-Adresse headland was the Belgian governing power, the arsenal of the heroic civic and diplomatic Belgian forces—with two great figures lacking—the king and Cardinal Mercier.

Still another war city, in Havre, was her city of wharves and docks. Day after day, month after month, camouflaged ships, transports and torpedo-boats packed every inch of Havre's all too scant harbor space. Soldiers crowded the ships from our own country, as from every one of England's patriotic colonies and from every corner of the British Isles, save rebellious Ireland.

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There was also the city of the skies.

For four long years, up in the regions of the vasty blue deeps, dirigibles, the eyes of the aviation fleet, would sail forth, peer down into the ocean depths, and once an enemy submarine was descried, presto! the telephonic message gave the exciting signal.

Out from their sheds along the shores the winged fleet soared aloft. All the skies were then pulsating with the vibration of throbbing motors. A swoop downward, a *pique*, and out through the azure a bomb would turn the seas to a splashing fountain. An oily, besmirched sea surface would prove, presently, that a certain number of Germans had been sent to the only world where they could do no harm.

Below the skies, there was the incredibly mixed world of all those nations that meet, but do not melt.

Abroad upon the Havre streets you would face Senegalese, Annamites, and Algerians; you would see negroes oozing from the bowels of deep ships, or coiled, in sensuous sleep, along the docks. Indians wearing their khaki with the dignity of another race, their turbans seeming to crown their shapely heads, would pass, but would not elbow the Chinese coolie or the Japanese aide. Sturdy English Tommies, on leave from their camp at Harfleur, would crowd every available café table for the sacred ceremony of afternoon tea; and our own athletic American soldiers would climb the hill above Havre to gain the Y. M. C. A. huts—that city also on the

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heights—the city of the cinema, the gramophone, the lecture-platform—and the profitable shop.

Threading his way through all this new world of men, marching or strolling with the nonchalant step of the man who treads his own home soil, you would have met the poilu, in his horizon blues, little dreaming, so long as the war was on, of the hero buttoned up within his ill-fitting uniform. His discovery of his value has come later—as the disconcerting protest of repeated strikes has proved to an amazed world.

III

Havre, now peace has come, has recaptured her semi-provincial calm. Walk through her boulevards and you will find a kind of dulled Parisian movement. Her great days are now a part of history.

Havre, however, has the responsive vibration of her nationality to great movements. Let the city be touched by the magic wand of a world crisis and she will be again alive to her finger-tips. She is already sentient with the nervous, elastic power of new and latent forces.

Havre is planning great enterprises; new activities in her commercial, industrial, and maritime life are being developed. The after-war momentum will carry her ambitious efforts to the attainment of fresh conquests.

Those of you who cross her streets and squares, and find Havre chiefly interesting because she is French, and not because she is beautiful, could never

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invest her modern thoroughfare, her bright shops, and her squalid alleys with any sentiment bequeathed from a past rich in romance.

Yet has Havre a story to tell that many a more famous city of great adventures may envy.

She had the best of beginnings for the recital of a fairy tale. She began her existence as the humblest of the humble. She started in life with a small group of fishermen's huts, buried in sand-dunes. Above this squalid village, on the hill slope above, stood a tiny chapel, known as La Chapelle of Le Havre de Grâce. Hence her earlier name of Havre de Grâce.

Two kings may be said to have held her over the baptismal font of her seas. One king, Louis XII, discovered in this unknown fishing village the possibilities of a great port. The second king, Francis I, Louis XII's successor, adopted the outcast. Having paid sixty ducats for his right to own a large part of Havre, Francis I made the best bargain any French king ever transacted.

Francis I, who did nothing by halves, immediately proceeded to rear the infant port, to *dot* it, and to enrich it.

In those days when Europe was emerging from the more or less anarchic conditions of the so-called Middle Ages, the best of the kings who ruled, who were endowed with the talents of true leaders, what, in point of fact were they, if not the greater adventurers? They took the road that led to change, to improvement; they started forth to paint the world

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in new colors. Such kings had the prophetic vision.

The king who came after this Louis—the true discoverer of Havre—was the very prince of royal adventurers. In love, in war, in captivity, in magnificence, and in the art of leading his people out from the lingering bondage of medieval darkness to riot in the full sun of Renaissance splendor, who can rival Francis I?

In the Louvre, in Paris, you may look upon the face of this great king, one that Havre grew to know as well as the faces of her own fisherfolk. That long oval, that fine Gallic brow, the prodigiously elongated straight nose—the nose even Titian must render distinctive rather than distinguished—the bearded cheeks and chin, the full Roman lips, and above all, the eye—dark, protruding, voluptuously lidded—the seeing eye of the lover of art and of a beautiful woman—here before you on the canvas you, too, grow to know, with an intimate sense of satisfaction, the countenance as well as much of the nature and character of the man who opened the great doors on France's *Vita Nuova*, on her new, on her truly modern career.

Francis I had come from Italy, flushed with his triumph. He was fresh from his victory—he had won Milan from the Sforzas.

His mind was saturated with the Renaissance spirit; he was still warmed with the glow of her intellectual activities, with the power and splendor of her artistic development.



KING FRANÇOIS THE FIRST
From a painting by Titian

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Francis I brought to France, as he was to prove in his enterprises at Havre, a new view of kingly conduct. This was the gift he brought from Italy with which to enrich his own kingdom—and Havre. He had seen the great Italian and Venetian ports crowded with shipping. What had France to show compared to these great world centers of maritime power? Two ports on a river—Honfleur and Harfleur! And the latter was being rapidly filled up with the mud of the Seine and with sand. Who could compare such ports with Genoa or with Venice?

Francis I did nothing indeed by halves. Whatsoever he planned had to be executed in a royal way. Whether it was decking France with magnificent palaces, or pitting himself against the greatest master-mind, as emperor and general, in Europe; or in the matter of love-making; or luring to France such artists as Cellini, as Primaticcio, above all others, as Leonardo da Vinci; whatever Francis I conceived, created, desired, or attracted by reason of his imaginative grasp and his magnetic charm, must be of a splendor commensurate with the largeness of a mind to whom small ways and petty ambitions were deemed unworthy of a French king.

Orders were given to the commandant of Honfleur to construct a "great port" at Havre, one to harbor "the great ships of our kingdom and those of our allies." Privileges were lavishly granted. The town must be peopled and finely built. Havre de Grâce promptly took the king at his word, and proceeded to grow and grow.

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Havre may, indeed, be said to have forestalled certain modern methods in business—if indeed the robbing of one's brother be not as old a crime as the first man who had one.

Havre's prosperity was built on Honfleur's ruin. As though it were not enough of bitterness for Honfleur to see her own docks deserted, her cargoes shipped at *nouveau riche*, plebeian Havre, it was part of her punishment for being on a river rather than on the sea to find her executioner in her own governor.

The commandant of Honfleur was ordered to go at once to Havre de Grâce *afin d'y percer et construire* a great port. And the great port was promptly brought to completion.

It has not only been the truism of our own world that great fleets, fine ports, and large armies are as so many fingers pointing the way to easy conquest; Francis no sooner had his port and harbors than he proceeded to utilize them.

Havre's harbors seemed to promise extraordinary facilities for approaching England's white cliffs. The king saw the possibility of his itch for the conquest of English territory being realized through his great harbors. William the Conqueror, and later Napoleon, were not the only French monarchs whose nights were troubled with that vision.

IV

Francis came down from Paris to lead in person the great expedition he had planned to capture the

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English fleet off the Isle of Wight. There were one hundred and seventy-six vessels in his fleet, one in those days deemed invincible.

He gave a great feast before the departure of the fleet to the governor of Havre, to the admirals and generals of the army and navy about to start forth.

Francis, fresh from the splendor of his own great court, with his luxurious tastes, his suite, with their customary costumes of satins and plumes and slashed doublets—where was such a company to find resting-place in so rude a little town? Let us try to picture that scene when Francis came down to inspect wharves and quays and basins—works he found already “well under way.” He would have found the embryonic city just emerging from its chrysalis state of fishermen’s huts and rude cottages. Timbered houses newly thatched, with coarse carvings on door-jambs and lintels; streets newly laid out—the accepted sixteenth-century street, without gutter or sidewalk, inches, if not feet, deep in mud and filth; and dormer-windows so neighborly Havre gossips could air all the scandals of the growing port without the trouble of peopling their doorways.

Courts, as late as the Napoleonic days, traveled with all the paraphernalia, the adornments of furniture and tapestries, the linen, silver, and glass, as well as with all the essentials for elaborate culinary arrangements. For Havre such precautionary measures were more than ever imperative.

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Francis, even when he hunted, Brantôme tells us, carried along chariots filled with the ladies of his court, with "fifty chariots filled with tents and tent-poles," six horses to each chariot.

To commemorate fitly so great an event as a speedy conquest of England, a magnificent arbor was erected on the docks of Havre. Covered with *feuillage*—with roses and tree-branches—great tables were laid.

What a scene the Normandy sun lit up!

Here was a bit of Italy on the bleak Havre coast. There were the costly lace covers, the finely wrought gold and silver flagons, and the rare wines sparkling, as the sun-rays touched their topaz and rubies to deeper tones.

Above the board, the lovely faces of women, their shoulders gleaming like new-dropped snow, framed in their wide Venetian-point collars, the gold and silver of their brocaded gowns matching the courtiers' gay silks and satins. Behind the guests the green walls of the arbor were lined with lackeys.

How Havre must have stared and marveled! To behold such splendor drew all the countryfolk from miles about.

What would not one give to have had that strange commingling of grandeur and squalor, of courtly magnificence and rugged homely folk reproduced for us! What a contrast to our dismally uniform, monotonous, colorless crowds! One tries to picture the gaily costumed courtiers, with their slashed satin doublets, their plumed hats, their laces, and

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gold-worked swords; the dazzle of the gold-embroidered uniforms of admirals and generals; the scent of perfume outrivaling the roses; and, as the focal point of all this splendor, "the Superb"—the king!—then, in those earlier years of his reign, in all the vigor and majestic grace of "one who outshone them all."

In the crowd assembled there were those more rugged faces, those more salient, expressive features of Havre's men and women, in the fishermen bronzed to deep tan, and in the peasants as ruddy as their wines, which we may see woven into the tapestries of the period.

As though laughing in her silent depths, there was the sea. Such sport as she would have with these plumed admirals! Such curses and groans as would be flung at her across the shining, high-hung decks!

The elements had determined indeed to make an end of the great enterprise before it was begun. The admiral's iron ship, the *Philippe*, took fire and burned before the very eyes of the king. But as tidal waves could not alter as determined a mind as was that of Francis I (for the first Havre he had endowed with extraordinary privileges was almost entirely swept away by the "male tide" Le Mascaret, only to have a second town grow, as by magic, out of the ruins)—as giant waves could not thwart the king's purpose, neither could fire.

The fleet went out to sea, however, only to encounter disaster after disaster. Forced to return to

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Havre, the ships were speedily and mournfully dismantled.

Francis, however, had not done with his naval follies.

V

Who can affirm the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries are the greatest among all other inventive ages? Behold Francis I anticipating, in minor degree, the size and many of the marvelous combinations of the floating palaces of our own day!

La Grande Française, a monster sea-going craft for those days, her carrying capacity being two thousand tons, was to astonish other kingdoms than France. The marvel of all maritime wonders was that which the interior of the vessel contained. There was a forge, a windmill, a *jeu de paume*, and a wooden house on her *tillac*. *La Grande Française* also contained a chapel capable of seating three hundred people.

The sea seemed to delight to sport, cruelly, with the king's maritime fancies. The monster was forced to await certain tides to launch it on its first voyage.

The malicious sea saw in its own tidal wave—Le Mascaret—its chance to teach monarchs the limits of their power. The great fury of the mounting waters so successfully pounded, kicked, and tossed this early leviathan about that *La Grande Française* was soon a mere wreck. Out of its timber certain of the very houses you may see, fronting the Quai de la Barre, were built.

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VI

Other kings and other faces of the rulers of France who came to the great port loom out of the historic mists.

There came Henri II, that lover to whom the age in his divinity seemed rather an attraction than the usual most cruel of disenchantments. When Henri came to Havre he brought, this time, his wife, Catherine de Medici, of evil memory, with him; but as he was also careful to bring along his court, what court could exclude, in its longest journeys, or in its shortest—Diane, huntress, mistress, diplomatist, statesman, lover of books—lover also of the English tub?

There was Henri III, that *prince à mignons*, who brought his dogs over from Caen, in a basket tied about his neck; who added to his other crimes of omission and commission that of allowing his treacherous governor, the Duc de Villars, to sell Havre to the English.

Henri IV appeared in his turn, in his genial and heroic character of savior of cities and of French *sous*. He added a fresh feather to his white panache by refusing the fête Havre proffered him, in his customary homely, vigorous way: "Give the money to the poor. In that way they will make by it and so shall I."

Lovely women's faces light up the duller pages of Havre's history.

The beautiful Duchesse de Longueville knew the prison of Havre of her day better than she did its

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sea beauties. Mazarin had more confidence in this remote fortress than in the too easily approached Bastille; he had the Duchesse's beloved brothers, the Princes de Condé and de Conti, as well as her husband, the Duc de Longueville, behind the strong bolts of the Normandy prison.

After the bolts were drawn, and princes and the Duc had made peace with the court, it was the turn of the Duchesse to know how dull prison life could be. Forced to live for some years on her husband's estate in Normandy, Norman fields and lanes, even gardens and courts, were found as repulsive as were Havre's gray fortress walls. Her ladies, seeking to divert her Grace, suggested riding, or walking, or tennis, or tapestry-work, as diversions.

"I do not care for innocent pleasures," was the revealing, contemptuous reply. Dull indeed must have seemed the provincial calm of Norman fields and forests to one who had played for the greatest prizes the kingdom had to offer, for one who had intrigued against Mazarin, and who had treated with Spain on equal terms; for her whose wit and beauty had held La Rochefoucauld captive for years, and whose caprices had given him "copy" for some of his bitterest epigrams on love and constancy; for the proudest of the Fronde's beauties, whose wondrous eyes had "troubled" Turenne, for the clever diplomatist who had maneuvered to put her own brother on the French throne.

Could such a woman find distraction in pushing a needle into canvas?



ANNE OF BOURBON, DUCHESS OF LONGUEVILLE
From a painting by Deceuse

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The Pompadour, when she came to Havre with her "unamusable" Louis XV, had a harder task. Although this later seductress was in the full flower of her youth and beauty, even her liveliest stories—and the Pompadour could tell a story as few women tell stories—neither her songs nor could her harpsichord enliven days which her royal lover felt to be among the deadliest for dullness he had ever spent.

Havre must wait for genius to find in her quiet streets, and now crowded docks, the possibilities of greater activities.

After the Peace of Amiens, Napoleon came to Havre with the woman who dimmed his star. Embellished and beautified as was Havre in this year 1810, yet Marie Louise must have found the city as dull as did the Pompadour.

This visit was shadowed by worse than dullness. "After six long years of patience, Havre still remained inactive; the English fleet still held the seas." The Emperor was no longer the same man as, when coming to Havre as Consul, he had captured the city by the all-discerning glance of his wonderful blue eyes; when docks and wharves were trodden with that firm, yet rapid step that carried him to the conquest of the world. During this first short visit there had been time for a full, investigating survey; every quay must be visited, every ship's deck inspected. Modern Havre may be said to date from the dreams formed by the Napoleon of these consulate days, when he aspired to the conquest of a world-empire.

The true conquest of England came just a century

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later. In 1814 Napoleon's star sank never to rise again, below the mists of the horizon.

Out of the mists of a glorious Normandy dawn, August 6, 1914, England came to clasp hands with France for the noble conquest of a world's liberation from militarism.

CHAPTER II

TWO PLEASURE TOWNS—TROUVILLE AND DEAUVILLE

I

AT this entrance to France, at her very gates, she presents those contrasts, that amazing variety in life and movement which are found to be among her most persistent, perdurable attractions.

Less than an hour's trip across the broad Seine's mouth and you land at the Trouville pier. In a little over a half-hour you are ferried over to Honfleur—two towns as far apart, in point of attraction and from the picturesque point of view, as are a summer city of villas and tents and an ancient town still holding fast to its antique charm.

Should you be happily inspired to take one of the tidal boats that ply daily between Havre and Trouville you would find the long ridge of hills barring the horizon becoming more and more definite, distinct.

Suddenly, as you neared the coast, the uprising greens would tumble to be lost in an indistinct blur of houses, of villas, and of a monster casino. An elongated pier, stretching out into the sea like an

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extended platform, would be, were it low tide, your landing-place.

The whites, browns, yellows, and pinks of the variously painted villas, framed in their decorative greens of foliated backgrounds, and to the right, the long lines, stretching along the amber beaches, of the little city of the tents, would leave no doubt in any one's mind that Trouville had set a certain fashion to all other towns and beaches born to bloom only under summer suns. From 1846 up to 1912 Trouville was undisputed queen of French summer pleasure towns.

Those marvelous white sands that make of her beaches a footing as firm as asphalt, and whose breadth and length are even more generous in size than a Parisian boulevard, drew all the court of the Third Empire, as they have the even more mixed worlds of the Republic, to bring vexed spirits, strained nerves, and weakened bodies to the healing of nature's tonic forces.

For all these worlds, what a prodigiously great stage was set here on the sands for the gaieties, vanities, tragedies, and splendors in which to play out their brief rôles! For effective backgrounds there are none to compare with the delicate blues of a French sky and the deeper sapphires of these northern seas. Trouville sat upon her topaz sands like a queen awaiting homage, assured of her all but unparalleled place among beaches.

The blue seas rolled to her amber feet; for her canopy there was the arching skies; and for her

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earthly kingdom there lay behind this her gleaming realm—Normandy lanes, Normandy thatched farm-houses, Normandy orchards, and Napoleon's incomparable roads.

Thus endowed, Trouville was indeed a king's morsel. Yet it was an artist and no king who, chancing on her loveliness, made her a world-famous beauty.

Boudin, one of the well-known artists of the middle of the nineteenth century, having wandered down along this lower Normandy coast of Calvados, struck by the grandeur of Trouville's attractions, painted a picture of her beaches.

Trouville's fortune was made.

Boudin's picture, exposed in the Salon of 1846, turned Parisian criticism to frantic acclamations of delighted surprise.

A beach as vast, as beautiful as this—at Trouville—so near Paris—and unknown! It seemed incredible!

The discovery of anything new or unknown in France, that is *French*, at any time is enough to turn all Parisian heads. To possess a part at least of this treasure-trove, therefore, became as contagious a mania as for courtiers to pay court to the latest beauty.

Such leaders as the famous Princesse de Sagan, the Marquise de Barbentane, the Princesse de Metternich, followed by all the horde of foreigners who made the social laws of Eugénie's mixed court, bought lots, built villas, and made of the Trouville

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beaches an extension of the Tuileries gaieties. The mad, reckless course of pleasure set by the leaders of that mad and reckless world could continue their wrecking process of the last Napoleonic era without a break in the continuous performance.

II

With the advent of the Republic of France and the country's gradual recovery from the disaster of Sedan, Trouville followed the upward rise of France's prosperity. Her pre-eminence among French watering resorts remained undisputed up to the fatal moment of her tilting for first place with her quieter, more strictly exclusive neighbor, Deauville.

Human passions can play as great havoc with a town or city as they do when kings play for empire.

The two provincial municipalities of Trouville and Deauville were each in turn devoured by a common, and not uncommon rage, to outdo the other in presenting to France and to the world the bribe of possessing the finest casino. Each little city began to build on a scale of princely magnificence.

Trouville cast the dice of her future stake for pre-eminence on the objective attraction of size; her casino was to be the largest in the world, the most elaborate, and the most comprehensive in furnishing unheard-of varieties of comfort and pleasure novelties. The easy road to ruin, from following the supposed-to-be-erratic curves of the "little

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horses" to the more tragic uncertainties of bacarat, was to be made fatally seductive by every witchery of artistic device. The best artists from the Paris orchestras, great actors from La Comédie Française, from L'Odéon, and singers whose voices were still unworn from the harshness of Russian and American winter climates were to turn Trouville into a Parisian musical and dramatic center.

The casino at Deauville confessed as elaborate a program and also as a building a purer, less sensational taste. The architectural lines of the long, low, creamy-white building, as it rose up above its beautifully laid out gardens—across the road—running out to the dunes—recalled Trianon models. The decorative Cupids adorning the casino cornice looking down on the scene of battle had an innocent air of playing a winning game.

It was the Cupids, in the end, who won out.

When the touchstone of the season opened for the final success or failure of the two great casinos, the two worlds of the habitués of the two beaches were as conjectural as to the ultimate decision in favor of one or the other—for one or the other must inevitably take second place—as were the trembling capitalists whose money was on the venture.

"Our husbands will go over to Trouville to follow the little ladies and gamble at their will, and we shall be left to empty rooms at our Deauville casino," a Parisian beauty ruefully sighed.

Marital Deauville decided differently. And Deauville's pre-eminence was assured.

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Trouville had lost. Her great gamble had resulted in failure. She must take second place. Behold her now, still crowded in the gay summer months; her little city of tents on her great beaches is still set daily for a world as various, as mixed, as any, only it is no longer *the* world, as her shops also proclaim a decline in values and her lodgings in rentals.

Trouville had sunk to the level of the semi-respectable beaches where a Parisian may take his wife and family—and even leave them—with no great fear of domestic or financial bankruptcy.

It is not, however, with this extension of Parisian boulevards with which we have to do. For the setting of a certain tragic scene we must make our way to Deauville, a short mile away, across the river Touques and its bridge—to the west.

Before Deauville was the Deauville of the *beau monde* it was a fishing village. Thatched houses, fishing-nets, men in blue jerseys may still be seen on the low hill beyond the weedy race-course, beyond the sand-dunes, the scarce pines, and the sandy plains—plains that since those early days have been made literally to blossom into a millionaire's paradise of roses.

The little watering-place owed its existence to the speculative talent of the clever Duc de Morny, Napoleon III's counselor, commonly supposed to be his natural half-brother.

The Duc knew his world well.

The Trouville beaches, he believed, would fail to draw the truly great, the securely intrenched aris-

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tocratic world of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, the world Napoleon III had never succeeded in luring to the Tuileries. Alluring, compellingly attractive as were these new Normandy beaches, these social *frondeurs*, who had never forgotten the Terror nor the Revolution, nor their own exile or that of their parents, nor the advent of the two "usurpers"—Napoleon I and III—felt they would find the Trouville air vitiated by being breathed by the "foreigners," by the social climbers, and by the adventurers who were crowding Trouville.

A more exclusive center must be found for this remnant of a world that had survived the Bourbon dynasties.

The Duc de Morny saw his chance, and took it. He would have been in his element in the later nineteenth-century speculative, trust-continuation era.

Across the river Touques there lay the sand-dunes of Deauville. The purifying qualities of that innocent river would be found as protective an element against the contaminating influences of this Napoleonic world as the Seine had proved in separating the sacred Faubourg Saint-Germain itself from disintegrating Tuileries influences.

The Duc and his company bought up Deauville sand-dunes, and the rise of villa plots on the sand-dunes soon justified de Morny's gambling, literally, in futures.

The exclusive world of the *crème de la crème* which, like a nest of Chinese boxes, becomes smaller and

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smaller as one approaches the central unit, managed, for several decades, to restrict Deauville life to one fashioned on the most accepted type of aristocratic traditions. This life had much of the charm, of that delicate and exquisite intimacy, of the distinction that even masked vice with a veil of decency such as characterized the life of the Lorraine court held under King Stanislas at Lunéville. In such an atmosphere gaiety soon recaptured its lost youth of enjoyment. Under Normandy skies, before the blue Normandy seas, love and pleasure took up the lyre and played their music of enchantment. No one counted the vows lisped in such a *scène de décors*. Even scandals were breathed low, since it had all happened in the family.

It was to such a world of players with life and destiny that the appalling echoes came of the tragedy of Sedan in the lovely September days of 1870. Down from Paris there followed, all too swift, news of the terrifying changes taking place in the court and government. The air was rife with revolution.

The cries that were ringing in the ears of the Empress Eugénie, "*Aux Tuileries!*" "*Aux Tuileries!*" and "*A bas l'Empire!*" "*Vive la République!*" were carried, as it were, on the wings of the air to strike white terror into the heart, and to test the soul of the aristocrats, many of whose fathers and mothers had heard the last of just such seditious cries only when they had laid their heads beneath the knife of the guillotine.

The pretty, striped tents could now be folded up;

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the musicians could wrap violins and drums and 'cellos in their casings; the steps of the dancers would glide no more, for many a day, over satiny floors; and for many a long day France would no longer beat out the rhythmic measure of pleasure to a startled and horrified world.

There was the roll of ominous thunder, the crackle of lightning strokes in the light, summer air.

"Vive la France!" "Vive la République!" "A bas l'Empire!" Such were the cries that brought consternation, anguish, and terror to every light-hearted pleasure-lover. Well they might, for with the defeat of the French army at Sedan, with the collapse of the second Napoleonic reign, a new world was to be born. Ermine mantles, royal crowns, and imperial splendor were to be the dust and débris of an inglorious past. The people and their leaders were forging new governments, and with a rapidity that seemed to be of magical power.

CHAPTER III

THE FLIGHT OF AN EMPRESS

I

THE scenes within the Palace of the Tuileries were rivaling, in tragic intensity and fateful issues, those that were changing, with the swiftness of a magic *baguette*, a monarchical form of government into the Republic.

The reception of Napoleon III's now historic telegram had been the opening scene in the downfall of the Empress Eugénie's reign as Regent; it was a scene which was to be played out to its tragic finish.

The army is beaten and captured; not having succeeded in being killed, in the midst of my soldiers, I was forced to give myself up as a prisoner, in order to save the army.

NAPOLÉON.

The Empress, as Regent, was to have this fatal news conveyed to her by her Minister of the Interior, Monsieur Chevreau. This gentleman was so overwhelmed by the awful disaster which had overtaken France, the army, and the Empire he found himself unable to utter a word, either of comment or of consolation, to the stricken Empress.

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Eugénie, who had risen to receive her Minister, on reading the despatch, sank into a chair, giving way to her despair; soon, however, checking her sobs, she rallied her courage and, fronting the more immediate dangers of the fateful hour, summoned a meeting of her Council.

This was to be the beginning of a long and tumultuous consultation, of hurried and agitated meetings and decisions of Ministers—of all that feeble rallying of waning forces to meet irresistible powers that were sweeping all things before it.

The one hope of the Empress was to save the crown. She made a last impassioned appeal to her Council; she pleaded that “to save France from the clutches of Bismarck” the country must rally to the support of the Emperor—the dynasty. But what is a Regency to effect who had neither generals nor bayonets nor personal popularity to uphold its power? The tidal wave of new forces, new life, and new ideals was carrying the people and their leaders to those insurrectional intensities that sweep away governments as easily as they cry new cries or shout “*La Marseillaise*”

All the efforts of friends and Ministers were vain.

There was the famous abortive interview of Prosper Mérimée with Thiers. The latter, having survived the shipwreck of one dynasty, had no taste for sinking ships.

There was the comico-tragic reply of General Trochu, governor of Paris, to his Empress’s imperative command to come at once to the Tuileries.

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"I am tired; I haven't dined; I will go this evening, after dinner, to see her Majesty."

This was the man who had sworn that very morning to protect his sovereign; who had vowed that those who attacked her would have to pass over his dead body; who, a few hours after this grandiloquent gesture, allowed the populace to enter the Tuileries and the Corps Législatif, and who had himself proclaimed, with prudential caution, once the Republic was announced as *un fait accompli*, President of the Government of National Defense.

Paris itself was in a ferment of excitement and of tumult; the city was in that state of exalted frenzy when it realizes constraining forces are removed and brute instincts can be given rein. A crowd, headed by a buffoon, had forced its way into the Corps Législatif and had settled itself comfortably in the seats of Deputies and Senators.

Other crowds had more definite ideas of material gain to be won out of this revolutionary movement. Pillage and plunder sang loud in the ears of the swarms that were hurrying to that gilded arsenal of imperial booty—the Tuileries Palace.

Meanwhile, the graver minds, the men who had been planning, working, suffering for long years, for France's liberation from despotism, were, fortunately for France, not only dreamers, thinkers, intellectuals, but men of action and resource.

With an amazing quickness of vision these revolutionary leaders seized what we now term the psychological moment. Jules Ferry, Jules Fabre,

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Gambetta, Rochefort, Kératry, and other Deputies had met together at the Palais Bourbon immediately after the populace had invaded the Corps Législatif. They felt there was not a moment to lose. These gentlemen hastened to the Hôtel de Ville—the beautiful civic building which the Commune was to burn only a few months later. From one of the balconies the new Republic was proclaimed; every tongue in Paris shouted the birth of France's freedom to the listening world.

II

As soon as the political adherents of the Napoleonic dynasty learned of the proclamation of the Republic, a committee of Deputies of the Corps Législatif hastened to the Tuileries. Louder than the clamorous-tongued fears and tremors that were ringing in these royalists' ears were the terrifying shouts to be heard outside of the palace:

"A bas l'Empire!" "A bas Napoléon!" "Vive la République!"

To emphasize the cries there were the premonitory tearing down of railings, of tree-branches, of the flux and reflux of a crowd mad with the drinking of the new heady wine of liberty, now pouring its waves against barred resistance, and now swayed by the eloquence of a street orator—that cheap form of a bid for momentary power to which every revolution gives quick birth.

The Deputies, meanwhile, were pleading with

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Eugénie. After giving full details of the recent momentous charges, they bent all their energies to force her to resign as Regent.

The Empress would not have been Empress, having tasted the intoxicating cup of imperial sway, and she certainly would not have been a woman, had she not clung to some fragment of power. But those dread cries without, that swelled upon the air like a terrifying prophecy of coming horrors—“*A bas!*” “*A bas!*”—these shouts lent, at last, convincing strength to the Deputies’ clinching arguments. Were the sovereigns but to resign, the powers both of the new government and of the Corps Législatif would be greatly strengthened and “France would be saved.”

These arguments finally prevailed. In accepting her doom and that of the Napoleonic dynasty, Eugénie, it must be admitted, even by her detractors who can see no virtues and only frailties and follies of vanity in her—Eugénie bore herself with befitting dignity in this critical moment.

“You wish it,” she said. “Such is not my opinion. But I put behind me all personal matters. If my Ministers agree with you concerning the measures you propose, the obstacle to their fulfilment will not come from me. . . .”

A few moments before she had said, in a broken voice: “Yes, you have seen me the crowned sovereign on fête-days. Hereafter nothing can soften the poignant remembrance of the present hour. I shall wear on my heart, eternally, all the sorrows of France—*tous les deuils de la France.*”

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Somewhat theatrical, one must admit, are such fine phrases; such they seem to us who, in our generation, speak a less inflated language. But Romanticism was in the air, Victor Hugo was the king of poets and dramatists, and Eugénie was herself more or less accused of knowing and practising the arts that impose on those the other side of the foot-lights.

While Senators, Deputies, Councils, and Cabinets were consulting and deliberating, the people who govern Paris in such revolutionary times were acting. The sap of insubordination had risen rapidly. And the ways of the "people" are strikingly similar. For revolutions all bear a certain family resemblance, since revolt means but one thing—revolt against authority.

The trumpet-calls of "*Aux Tuileries!*" "*Aux Tuileries!*" had not failed of their clamorous effect. The populace, surging about the inclosed private gardens of the Tuileries, attempted to force the gates. There were a few courageous gentlemen among the crowd, whose quick wits and whose sang-froid prevented a repetition of the scenes of 1830.

Victorien Sardou (then a young man, the great playwright-to-be), General Mellinet, and the famous Ferdinand de Lesseps, who was already beloved in Paris, confronted the heated crowd. The old General Mellinet's deep saber-cut across his face, received in the Crimean War, also made its sensational appeal to the masses crying, "*A bas l'Empire!*"

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Pointing to the palace flagpole from which there floated no longer the imperial flag, the general cried:

"You see, there is no longer the flag. The Empress is gone."

Joyous and wild were the shouts that followed the announcement, to be succeeded by the cries, "*Vive la République!*"

A message having been sent to announce to Eugénie that the insurgents were attempting to force the gates of the garden of the Tuileries, those who were still about her Majesty urged her to quit the palace while there was still a chance of escaping. Anything, everything must be tried rather than fall into the hands of the populace. That would mean—might mean— Alas! what horrors had not their own revolution—that "harvest of long centuries" taught crowned heads whose crowns were tottering.

The Empress still showed no terror. Yet she knew well her history. Had she not made a cult of collecting bibelots, jewels, furniture, miniatures, and portraits of her sorrowful, of her far more unfortunate predecessor, Marie Antoinette?

While the air of Paris about her ears was vibrant with mad cries and shouts, its Empress—who had been fighting what it must be conceded was a gallant fight for her dynasty, who, whatever her sins of frivolity, of an undue lust for power, of unwise and ignorant counsels, and use of all possible personal influence to urge Napoleon to make this dis-

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astrous war—Eugénie's wanting in personal courage cannot be laid to her charge.

To those who surrounded her in that last hour, all of whom were urging immediate flight, she repeatedly assured these her all-too-few true friends: "I am not afraid. Why should I go?"

Again, she answered the pleas of the more importunate, "It is here I was placed by the Emperor, and here I shall remain. . . ."

The cries of "*Aux Tuileries!*" "*Aux Tuileries!*" were now rolling in thunderous tones from the already invaded gardens.

Prince Metternich, the Austrian Ambassador, and Monsieur Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, presently hurried into the palace, demanding immediate audience.

"The populace is mistress of the Palais Bourbon—is preparing to attack the Tuileries. The Empress must be made to understand that all resistance is useless. She remains here at the risk of her life. We come to offer her our protection."

It required the further assurance of Monsieur Piétri, Préfet de Police, that in ten or fifteen minutes "it is impossible to say what she might be able to do, what crime she might commit were she to remain."

Convinced at last she was endangering the lives of the few friends and courtiers who had remained faithful to this last hour of her reign as Empress, Eugénie consented to take her flight. Her adieus to those about her were so prolonged that the Italian

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Ambassador was forced to cry, imploringly, "You must hasten—in a few moments flight will be impossible!" And he himself hurriedly handed her her hat and veil.

Followed by the two Ambassadors, by certain officers and heads of the Emperor's Cabinet, and by Madame Le Breton, her reader and *dame de compagnie*, the party slipped through a private door of the Empress's apartments. In one of these rooms Eugénie stopped short. Glancing around the well-known souvenirs, the pictures, baskets, bibelots, with which the cozy, homelike room was crowded, she cried, as though to herself, "Is it really for the last time?"

As this now uncrowned sovereign pursued her flight in her once owned palace, now retracing her steps, the door leading to the court of the palace having been found too dangerous for exit, the crowds surging about the Place du Carrousel, crying, "*A mort!*" "*A mort!*"; now regaining the very apartments the party had quitted in such haste; next, she and her friends taking their way through the interminable series of rooms leading to the galleries of the Louvre, only to find the door opening into the galleries securely locked; living through the agitated, tremulous excitement of no answer save dumb silence to repeated knocks; quivering to the sudden, stunned realization that their sole means of escape was thus cut off; lifted to sudden sense of rapturous relief by the all but miraculous appearance of the Treasurer of the Emperor, with the key of the open door to safety before them in his pocket; then the

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hurried rush across the Salon Carré, the Pavillon d'Apollon, down to the Salles des Antiquités Grecques et Egyptiennes; the swift glance shot at the seated figures of those long dead and gone Egyptian kings and queens, as though passing in review those other dynasties whose reigns also had ended in dust and ashes—and—at last—at last—with the furtive opening of the last door, after a particularly turbulent crowd has passed the Place Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, there came the blessed freshness of the open air—the sudden hush of a great quiet after the dying away of the fearsome, vociferous shouts.

Was it indeed freedom—was it safety—yet?

III

The Empress's flight, in reality, had but begun.

To the party in flight, once away from the Tuileries apartments, the palace walls had seemed to offer some shadow of security. Once outside the palace, facing the open street, and every instant was fraught with danger.

Eugenié's features were as well known as must be any faces constantly before a public as sensible to beauty and to personal charm as are Parisians. The Empress's daily drives in the Bois, her repeated appearances at all seasons of the year, in an open landau, in the imperial tribunals of the race-courses, at operas and theaters, at fêtes, as well as the innumerable photographs reproducing her in every possible pose and in every costume, had

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familiarized Eugénie's classical style of Spanish beauty to every *gamin* of the gutter as to every boulevardier.

The much-dreaded danger of immediate recognition, therefore, was not long in announcing its fateful possibilities.

"*Voilà l'Impératrice!*" ("There's the Empress!") cried a street boy, gazing hard at the pale but classically perfect face beneath the derby hat.

"What is that you say?" with astonishingly quick presence of mind, asked Monsieur Nigra. And taking the lad aside, he managed to keep him interested while Prince Metternich hurried the two ladies—the Empress and Madame Le Breton—into the shabby cab awaiting them.

This public vehicle, it had been decided, was far safer for traversing the streets filled with excited crowds and insurgents than would be the Prince Imperial's private coupé, with all its liveries and the Prince's crown, awaiting orders below the Prince Imperial's apartments.

The group which had started with the Empress from the palace apartments had now been considerably reduced in numbers.

A second parting scene took place, in which tears and touching farewells had been exchanged between the fleeing Empress and this little band of faithful courtiers. For the Empress to have appeared in the open streets with as numerous a company as the groups that had followed her was deemed unsafe.

Once seated in the cab, the two ladies shrank into



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the depths of the little vehicle, after the two Ambassadors had made their adieus.

The Empress Eugénie, with her companion, now began through the streets of Paris their melancholy search for their safest hiding-place. Neither the Prince de Metternich nor Monsieur Nigra seemed to have considered it a part of their duties at least to have further counseled the Empress as to her immediate destination. The two ladies, thus left alone in broad daylight, exposed to any chance encounter which might easily bring about the worst of fates, having hastily given orders to their driver to take them to a certain number in the Boulevard Haussmann—the residence of the State Counselor—one of them was living through one of the most extraordinary experiences a dethroned monarch ever encountered.

The cabby had quite naturally driven his fare straight into the broad thoroughfare of the rue de Rivoli. On and on, past the façades facing the famous street, past the palaces—hers never to be again—of the Louvre and the Tuileries; past the arcades; and also—most heart-sickening of all—past the still brilliantly flowered private gardens of the Prince Imperial, where he had been trundled as a baby, where his first infant steps had been taken, where as a boy and lad he had romped and played—the heedless cab-driver, like fate itself, as ruthless and seemingly as unconsciously cruel, had driven the Empress past these palaces and gardens as though to impose upon her a final review of all the

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beauty, the tender, familiar scenes, and also of all the splendor she must leave behind forever.

No drop of the bitter cup of defeat, of loss, of coming expatriation was to be spared Eugénie.

The Republic had come!

The news of the proclamation that the hated Third Empire had collapsed like a pack of cards; that the Empress had fled; that the Tuileries, as had the Corps Législatif, had been entered by the "people"—but where, so admirably guarded did the intending pillagers find the palace and all its rooms and treasures, no booty nor desecration could be indulged in—this glorious, unbelievably astounding news had flown over every quarter of Paris. No more hateful spying; no more autocratic discipline and policed existences; no more wasteful enriching of useless monarchs and courtiers; no more enslaving of a great people—the new Republic was just born and its gifted godfathers were guaranty of its longevity.

The mounting of the tidal wave of new forces, new life, new ideals was carrying the packed crowds that filled the streets to demonstrate their joy and sense of deliverance from hated despotism in the exuberant, intensive French way. Men and women could be seen embracing one another; old and young wept as they shouted the new watchwords of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." Already, in these few brief hours, the brute instinct to demolish, to plunder, to kill had been transformed by joy into more human manifestations of delight. All Paris

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was literally *en fête*; the Parisian soul was supplying the lighting.

Thus, with ears ringing with the exultant shouts of a happy people, with the long-suppressed soaring notes of the "Marseillaise" filling the air, through street scenes in which dances and embraces played themselves out before all the world, the sad-eyed Empress and her sole lady companion made their way.

It was reserved for Eugénie alone among the four preceding monarchs who had attempted or who had achieved their flight to look forth upon a Republic born from the death-throes of despotism.

Arrived at their destination, the ladies dismissed their cab—an imprudent proceeding, as they were soon to discover. After mounting the three or four flights leading to the Counselor's apartment, it was only to face fresh disaster. No one responded to their persistent ringing. Realizing at last her state of fatigue, induced by several sleepless nights, and from the long nervous tension of these past terrible days of suspense, of anguish, of the rallying of all her forces to fight against the relentless powers arrayed against her, the exhausted Empress sat herself down on one of the stairs opposite the closed door.

Just a year before this fatal date for the Napoleonic dynasty, in 1869, this seated figure, awaiting response to an unanswered bell, awaiting the advent of the master of this high-perched, modest bourgeois apartment, as her possible savior, had been

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queen of the most gorgeous of all Oriental fêtes and festivals.¹

The Sultan of Turkey, Abdul Hamid, fitly to receive the Empress of the French come to Constantinople on her way to open the Suez Canal, had transformed the most beautiful of modern palaces on the Bosphorus (the Palace of Beylerbey) into a French palace. Eugénie arrived to find the very hangings of the rooms in the Tuileries had been copied. From this most festal of modern Oriental palaces, its bright marbles set so close to the water's edge they seemed a part of the bright surface; out from walls, and kiosks, whose latticed windows were goldened; out from palace chambers redolent of perfume; out from gardens heavy with the scent of roses, clematis, and narcissi—the Empress went forth to fêtes and scenes that must have seemed rather the phantasmagoria of a poet's dream than reality.

From the moment of her reception in the Golden Horn, as she made her way up through the blue-hued Bosphorus to this enchanted palace, the Empress of the French lived through days and nights of which the splendors of this reception were but the prelude.

As Eugénie appeared, seated alone on the raised dais of her caique—one specially built for her of polished cedar, with its gold and silver ornaments, its adornments of gorgeous Eastern silks and satins—in all the splendor of her beauty, enhanced by her

¹ *In the Palaces of the Sultan*, 1903, Anna Bowman Dodd.

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Parisian full-dress costume, wearing her diadem of jewels as proudly as though born to such royal distinction, the Sultan's imperial caique shot forth from Dolma Baghtec to meet her.

As the cortège now floated onward, they found the Bosphorus crowded with every variety of ships, steamers, and yachts. In thousands of caiques, the dark Oriental eyes of hundreds of Turkish women, clad in all the Eastern glory of brilliant-hued garments, looked out above their gauze yashmaks on the unveiled Empress, with eyes full of wonder, on a scene as novel and dreamlike to them as it was to their European guest.

The shouts of welcome from the throngs lining the shores were only louder than the marine bands' festal music rising from the decks of the various ships assembled. Fêtes, festivals, banquets, crowded the days and nights of this unique and wonder-yielding visit.

And a year—less than a year—later the central figure of that resplendent scene was resting on the stairway of a modest French apartment, her husband a prisoner, the Empire a lost cause, the whereabouts of her son, the Prince Imperial, an eating anxiety, and she herself anxiously questioning where next to turn for succor, for safety.

The Counselor and his household failing to appear, the weary Empress and her companion conferred where next to seek an entrance into the household of trusty friends. Mr. Washburn, the American Minister, was thought of; but his diplomatic duties

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might prevent, it was believed, his rendering the necessary aid. The American name suggested another, that of Doctor Evans, an old friend, the oldest perhaps in France, since it was the accident of a fortunate dental appointment at Doctor Evans' office that chance had played its happy trick and made, eventually, of Mademoiselle de Montijo, the lovely Spanish girl, an Empress.¹

The doors of the famous American dentist, in his sumptuous apartment close to the Arc de l'Etoile, were opened, and the doctor shortly appeared. Amazed, astounded, he was to find in "the two lady visitors," announced by his *valet de chambre*, the Empress and Madame Le Breton.

IV

In the painfully sad explanations the Empress gave her friend of her sorrowful plight—"You see I am no longer happy; the bad days have come, and I am abandoned," she had cried, after going into detailed narration of all that had happened since

¹ Mademoiselle de Montijo, Comtesse de Tiba, was for some time a patient of Doctor Evans. At that time she lived, together with her mother and sister, at No. 12, Place Vendôme. A friend of Napoleon III's, then Prince President, being pressed for time, on the occasion of his awaiting his turn in the doctor's office, was agreeably surprised by the offer of a surpassingly beautiful young girl, seated beside him, to give him her place. On inquiring of the doctor who was the gracious beauty, and on learning her name, he narrated the incident to the Prince President. On hearing her charms of face and manner thus extolled, Napoleon III expressed a desire to have the mother and her daughter presented. A short time after their names appeared regularly on the lists of those invited to the Palais de l'Elysée.

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the news of Sedan and the Emperor's telegram—the doctor, having assured Eugénie she could count absolutely on him for all possible help and succor, asked her Majesty:

“Have you formed any plans, have you any wishes for any particular project, for the future?”

The Empress immediately confessed her longing to go as quickly as possible to England. There she hoped that both the Emperor and the Prince Imperial would speedily join her.

Doctor Evans, approving of the plan, announced he would make immediate preparations for leaving Paris.

The short September twilight having settled into early night, the doctor insisted on his guests taking both rest and nourishment. Though the Empress at first rebelled, desiring to leave Paris at once, she finally acquiesced. Her presence in the house was kept a profound secret, even from the servants, the valet who had led them in presuming the two ladies long since had departed.

While the Empress and her friend were seeking what proved to be vain efforts to woo sleep, Doctor Evans and his assistant, Doctor Crane, spent the night in planning the escape from Paris into the open country.

Deauville, it was decided, was to be the objective point. Mrs. Evans was passing the month at the Hôtel de Paris at the latter resort. No sojourn would offer better security than the suite of rooms occupied by the doctor's wife. Deauville was a port. A

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yacht, sailing-boat, or steam-launch could be counted upon for them to take passage across the Channel.

At early dawn, about half past five, on the following morning, the Empress in her black cashmere gown, a water-proof for a mantle, white collar, two handkerchiefs—which she had to wash frequently during the next few days—her low derby hat and veil, with neither traveling-bag nor other covering than her mackintosh, began her odyssey.

With that practical foresight so eminently American, the two doctors had foreseen several of the more serious dangers they might have to face. Certain passports the Empress had brought with her had been carefully examined; the one chosen was a permit to allow a certain Doctor C—— to take a patient to England. Signed by the Préfet de Police of Paris, it would serve admirably the purpose. Doctor Crane would personate the Doctor C——, the Empress the patient; Doctor Evans was to figure as the latter's brother, and Madame Le Breton as her nurse. The passport, being made out for passage to England, made the voyage thither doubly safe.

V

The sun was not yet risen, Doctor Evans states in his excellent and detailed narrative of this tragic departure, when the party started. Remembering that it had been Louis XVI's imprudent head—thrust through the open window at Varennes, on the attempted flight of the king and Marie Antoi-

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nette, and the recognition of the monarch's pulpy features and bulky frame, to which the indiscreet order, shouted aloud, "to go to Varennes," were the convincing proofs that had brought about the arrest of the king and queen, their imprisonment, and eventually their death on the scaffold, Doctor Evans had placed the Empress on the left of the carriage, thus screening her as much as possible from the sentinels posted at the city's gates.

On entering the vehicle, into the depths of which Eugénie sank, she began playing her rôle of fatigued invalid.

Through the foggy thickness of the September dawn the carriage rolled past Paris, at its early matutinal toilet. The street-scavengers were cleaning the streets; little by little day broke, warm, still, rosy. Shopkeepers were soon opening shutters; men and women were hurrying to their toil cityward, and belated market-wagons were plodding toward their distant stalls. Paris proved herself, on this day after an Empire had been overturned, after Sedan, after the most disastrous news that had come to France since Waterloo, and after the stormy scenes which had culminated in the quick birth of a Republic, with full knowledge the Germans were marching on the city—Paris yet proved herself the industrious, orderly, *sous-winning* city that can go through a debauch of revolution on any day and night, and wake up sober the next morning.

The extraordinary tranquillity of the country-

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side—even of that part of the country lying along the outer boulevards and the Seine banks—as the party made their way out from Paris to Rueil, to La Malmaison and to Saint-Germain, this was one of the surprises that were noted by this fleeing party of four. This amazing quiet, this soothing hush of voices, were the best of restoratives to nerves that had been on the rack for long days and nights. It seemed impossible to credit the turmoil, the passionate scenes of anger and violence of the day before—of the long night. Before the smiling face of this charming landscape, following the greens of meadows and the peace of the silently flowing Seine, how believe in the recording memories of those mad, swaying, bloodthirsty crowds which, once the Republic proclaimed, were turned into the joyous, singing, dancing groups that made all Paris seem *en fête*?

Other memories, the doctor tells us, were also evoked, as they passed on a road crowded with historic souvenirs. Only twenty years ago and at Neuilly there had stood a château in which were passed the “happiest days of my life,” records the Prince de Joinville, third son of Louis Philippe. This royal château had been pillaged, burnt, and all but destroyed by the easily roused to furious dealings of the French populace—as weary in 1848 of their constitutional king, Louis Philippe, as they had been of the immortal Napoleon I.

Soon the carriage-wheels were rattling along the cobble-paved streets of Rueil, in whose plain-visaged church are the tombs of the Empress

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Joséphine and Hortense. Farther on lay the park of La Malmaison. With every breath of the now rising morning breeze there must have swept before these four travelers the vivid historic splendors and tragedies of which La Malmaison had been the center: Joséphine, as the youthful pensionnaire at her near-by school, eyeing the château, even as a girl, with envious eyes; later, its proud and lavishly extravagant mistress, as the wife of Europe's hero, the Consul Bonaparte. And for all the "great property" of that later accumulated splendor and glory, of a story of magnificent adventure outrivaling all imagined stories—behold the end—in the two all-but-forgotten graves in the quiet little Rueil church, while the greatest man since Cæsar had died a prisoner on a hard little bed on a rock-fortressed island, in alien seas.

Here, surely, must Eugénie have felt her own woe a companion picture to that end of great, though fretted, fortunes.

Hers was, at least, to be the better fortune.

The Porte Maillot had been safely passed. The well-conceived plot of patient, doctor, brother, and nurse had been easily accepted for truth by sentinels and gendarmes. Saint-Germain, Poissy, Mantes—where there was a successful change of vehicles and horses—as far as Thibouville-la-Rivière, the village automobiles now pass on their way to the Normandy coast. These had been entered and left behind with tremors as every town was approached, only to have such fears allayed and assuaged.

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Everywhere throughout the whole of the long seventeen hours' journey the travelers had found that France was traversing an historic epoch with a calm and an attitude of easy acceptance that announced the country's sound morale.

Close to Evreux, indeed, fearsome sounds—shouts, the singing of the “Marseillaise,” a crowd of peasants and townspeople waving flags, with arms sawing the air, awoke renewed anxiety. It was only a pastoral way of celebrating the birth of *La République*.

At Thibouville-la-Rivière the second most serious danger confronted the party. At ten at night it was found that no farther progress could be made. The Empress and her friends had to be content to pass the night in a miserable inn. Every room was filled. It was solely owing to the courtesy of a certain coachman, who had already gone to take possession of the last available chamber, that a bed was procurable for a “poor lady,” too weary to proceed on her journey, and for her “nurse.”

It was at Lisieux that perhaps the most pathetic episode of this odyssey of the imperial flight occurred.

Having been conveyed so far as Serquiny by train, no vehicles being available, and a compartment in the train having been found happily vacant, from this junction of Serquiny on to Lisieux, it was at the latter little picturesque city that one might have beheld a picture such as proves the way of fate with mortals who have been set above their fellows.

A figure, tall, stately, yet stooping as though weighed beneath some burden of misfortune or of

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sorrow, might have been seen standing beneath the porte-cochère of a carpet-factory. Pale as was the face, with lines deeply indented from loss of sleep and eating cares, yet head and face were still proudly held. The rain was pouring down pitilessly. And this lady, standing, was seemingly waiting for the shower to cease.

"When I arrived at the street leading to the station, I saw the Empress standing under the rain, at the opening of the factory, seemingly alone, presenting such a perfect picture of abandonment as I shall never forget," Doctor Evans tells us in his interesting account of the journey.

VI

The remainder of the journey was thenceforward accomplished without further incident.

A suitable vehicle had been found at Lisieux, and the thirty-five-odd kilometers to Deauville were made along one of the most perfect of Normandy roads.

In the happy consciousness of the knowledge that the journey was nearing its end, the travelers at last found relief from their days' and nights' anxiety in exchanging experiences and in recounting some of the amusing episodes of the flight. Madame Le Breton, in one café along the road, had made the coffee; in another, the only luncheon obtainable for the Empress had been a bologna sausage, bread some two yards long, and wine and cheese. Eugénie pro-

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duced her two handkerchiefs, which were the only articles that she had brought with her and which she had carefully washed and as carefully pressed. At Thibouville-la-Rivière Mademoiselle de Montijo was reappearing, now that the ermine mantle of royalty was slipping off.

Better even than the relief which permitted smiles and a philosophy of acceptance—"When we are not pushed to necessity we do not suspect our aptitude to do certain things," the Empress had said—better than a semi-reconquered gaiety was the taste of salt on the lip. For the sea was sweeping its fresh breath across the lovely Pont-l'Evêque plains, up through the romantic valley of the Touques, across whose verdant plains and under whose richly foliaged trees another queen—one dead long centuries—looked out, it is said, for many a long day from the ramparts of a certain château whose walls are still standing, to hear news of the taking of England by her lord, William, soon to be known as "the Conqueror."

VII

For those who delight in decking historic episodes with the tinsel of romance, the Empress's flight was to culminate in an entrance to the Deauville hotel through secret doors. The party were also to confront, further, all but insurmountable difficulties in the reluctance of an English nobleman to convey an Empress in flight to England in his yacht.

Doctor Evans was able to effect the Empress's

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entrance into Mrs. Evans' private apartments in the Hôtel de Paris, at Deauville, with utmost secrecy. He led the way to a little door opening on a garden, through which he could insure Eugénie's presence in the Evanses' rooms being unknown to either proprietor, servants, or guests.

Once in the spacious security of these hotel rooms, it must have seemed to the weary Empress that safety and peace were greeting her in the warmth of the sympathetic welcome extended by Mrs. Evans.

There were to be, however, only a few hours of this most grateful sense of security, in this enjoyment of tried friendship, as well as in the physical and material comforts of luxurious apartments.

The ever-pursuing shapes of fear lest at any moment the fleeing Empress might be tracked, arrested, and taken back to Paris sent the indefatigable doctor at once to the Deauville docks. His one hope, his driving purpose, was to have his Empress-friend sent safely forth on her voyage to English shores.

His inquiries at the Deauville port elicited the news that an English yacht was to sail for England the very next morning. In the owner, Sir John Burgogne, the doctor found the typical English gentleman. Sir John had served in his Majesty's army; he was proud of his yacht, delighting in showing off its good points. With characteristic English bluntness, he refused point-blank, on hearing Doctor Evans' demand to undertake the adventurous task

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of embarking as dangerous a guest as a French Empress, flying for her very life, and of being responsible for her safety, to England. Sir John gave several excellent but unacceptable reasons to the two Americans for this somewhat cavalier refusal. Although he had to acknowledge, in fronting the amazed doctor's outcries, that the Empress was in danger every moment she remained on French soil, yet he announced his refusal as irrevocable. That Sir John was a true Englishman at core, however, was soon proved. When Doctor Evans, indignant, yet disguising a state approaching anger under a coat of courtesy, stated he had seen another yacht, one smaller than Sir John's, one which he was quite certain could be obtained for their purpose, the Englishman's prudence gave way before his fear of disastrous consequences to a woman—and, above all, to a crowned head—in distress.

The smaller yacht "would never do," Sir John declared. Bad weather was coming on, the seas were high, and so small a craft could never live in such seas as might roll up.

"Go and see my wife. If Lady Burgogne consents to the Empress coming on board, she can come."

Lady Burgogne did not need persuasion. A lady was in distress; that the proposed guest happened to be as distinguished a personage as the Empress Eugénie seeking safety for her very life in England was more than a compelling reason for coming to her rescue.

Once again, therefore, before the early breaking of

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a tempestuous dawn, the Empress set forth with her devoted friend and Madame Le Breton. In fitful gusts, a strong nor'wester tore through tree-branches, whipping the keen air to stinging cold. The dull moon was chased in and around by murky clouds, the pallid moonbeams only making blacker the utter darkness. No light nor lanterns could guide the party on their way; past the Place de Morny, down the rue du Casino, nowadays as familiar to Deauville and Trouville visitors as is la rue de la Paix; on and on through puddles, into which the two ladies splashed ankle-deep, stumbling against piles of lumber, knocking against railings and street débris; dirty, wet, with clothes drenched and with boots clogged with mud, at last the satiny deck of the *Gazelle* was reached. The gracious welcome extended to the distinguished fugitive was as gratifying as was the reviving hot punch proffered.

Eugénie's trials were not yet ended. As though the fates had joined hands to make merry over fallen grandeur, the seas were to join in wild, tempestuous dances. No sooner had the *Gazelle* put out from port than she fronted gales such as captain and owner never before remembered to have experienced. In lieu of the few short hours Sir John had reckoned would land them on the English coast, there were nearly twenty-four hours of battling with seas such that each monster wave promised to engulf the boat. Again and again some of those on board gave themselves up for lost.

"I was certain we were lost," the Empress ad-

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mitted later, "but, singular as it may seem, I experienced no fear. If I disappear now, I said, death cannot come at a better moment, nor give me a more desirable tomb."

At last the Isle of Wight showed its shores. And still there was the night to face and mountainous seas to fight. The Empress seemed to have escaped imprisonment and possible death only to find in this savagery of the elements a fiercer foe.

Her fate was not to die—but to live on and on. She was to see her husband return, a broken man, from defeat and disaster worse than the death he had so coveted. Eugénie was to make as grave a mistake in the ruling of that fine creature, her son, as she had in attempting, in her ignorance and folly, to guide and direct a great nation. She was to live to see the France she deemed only a Napoleon and his despotic government could save leap to nascent vigor, proving forces and qualities it had needed democracy to develop to fullest capacity.

She was to live on to see the ocular proofs of France's victories pass her very doors—victories won by a free people, fighting their own fight for a free France.

Forty-odd years later the Republic was to prove to an amazed, electrified world that a free people, under a free government, could outrival in Spartan endurance, in splendor of military achievement, and in heroic self-sacrifice all the historic records of Greece or Rome.

As a white-haired old lady, her years stretching

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far into the 'nineties, the aged ex-Empress had to stand, leaning on her cane, a year or more ago, to allow a long line of German prisoners to pass across the road separating the woods of Farnborough from her own inclosed park and residence.

Did those dim eyes take a backward glance into the past and marvel that imperial grandeur failed where a bourgeois people and government have won immortal laurels?

CHAPTER IV

TO HONFLEUR—THE ANCESTOR

I

WITH the Deauville of the after-the-war gay days I had no business. The *nouveaux riches* and the *nouveaux pauvres* who crowd the stands on the day of Le Grand Prix, the crowds who fill the golf-club, the casino, and the beaches—with none of these have I aught to do. In the pursuit of pleasure the gay world follows there are disillusioning uncertainties. I was off on a bout of more assured delight.

Once more I was to take the tidal boat at Havre. On this occasion it was to cross over to Honfleur. The boat was what we Americans would call an early starter. Were one bent, as was I, on a voyage of discovery, one could have chosen no more perfect moment. It was indeed so matutinal an hour I was the only Columbus. I inwardly saluted each Havrais market-woman aboard as a fellow-adventurer; in lieu of being, it is true, on a quest for novelty, these thrifty creatures were true Normans, on the trail of a good bargain at the Honfleur markets.

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This short cruise across the mouth of the Seine presented so uncommonly animated a scene I, for one, had little mind for exchanging my *fauteuil d'orchestra*, as one might term my seat on the bridge, for experiments on land. All those historic heads had vanished. Tragedies could not relive their terrors under such skies.

With the sun's great shining on earth and heaven, there seemed a something, a sign, as it were, written above, on the blue zenith, to serve as a promise one were going to another, to a different world. Busy trafficking, clamoring exchanges, active consulates, and great ships, sovereigns flying for their lives—all this modern world was like a page already conned and the leaf turned down.

The sun itself shone with another brightness on these Seine waters. It was now the true Normandy sun. In summer, when the sun pours out its gold on Norman lands or water, sober Normandy laughs—that is, when among tree-branches or along pebbly beaches it is not singing.

Over these sparkling waters there was the best of company afloat. There was such a varied collection of craft as for four and more long years the Seine has proudly carried, with due sense of its importance as the great watery highway. There were still camouflaged ships, but these were going the right way now—they were heading for their home ports. There were long strings of lesser ships, towed by smoking, bustling torpedoes snorting the snort of the small in stature. As fresh proofs of the recent

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peace there were the heavily laden Norwegian ships, their decks piled high with lumber from Norway's forest-lands—those woods that are to be soon the reconstructed homes of thousands in devastated France.

For lively motion and grace, there were the sea-gulls, dipping, soaring, squealing. For poetry, there were the boats that turn the plainest-faced waterway into a poet's corner, and there was a fishing-fleet sailing along as only boats with true sails step the waters. Their carmine, yellow, white, and brown sails were printed against the blues of this summer heaven.

Between the sudden warmth of the day, between the dazzle of the glistening Seine, between this novel sense of going on a voyage of discovery, one had a heady feeling. The great breath of the river-mouth seemed a promise of large adventure.

On rounding the Honfleur pier there was no disillusioning break in this fantastic hope. We were fronting a little world a thousand miles away from commercial Havre, from frivolous modern Deauville.

In point of fact, we were to slip back, in landing on the Honfleur quay, exactly three hundred years. We were, at first, a little bewildered at the plunge. It is not given to every one to take the right mental dive, at the first moment of encounter, into a seveneenth-century town. It seemed incredible as great a contrast could be presented between bustling, up-to-date Havre and this ancient-faced town. But

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herein lies the hold France has on the world—it is the land of contrasts.

Honfleur presented itself, at the first glance, as possessing the right ancestral charm.

There was a bewildering medley of streets running riot up and down hill, and of fishing-boats so close to stone quays they seem to have sprung from their very bowels. There were other streets starting off, running away up hill and down, as though pirates were about to loot them.

That the charm of the unexpected may be complete, Honfleur presents you, at the very outset, with an antique gateway, still guarding its docks, all but tumbling into them, in fact, with a church that turns its back on you, as might a ship showing you its stern; and with a beautiful wooden belfry that is a true belfry, yet one which is also a house, a magazine in which to store things, and which has a clock that never goes—like the town itself that is not, nor ever will be, up to the hour of the present day.

However much one's feet may ache to go off on a walking-tour about those irregular, rioting little streets, the curious gateway we were to learn was "La Lieutenance" enchains one. This delightful survival of Honfleur's fortifications has as many magics of attractions as a heroine of romance. Its tiled roof, its steep steps, its single audacious tree—one seemingly suspended in midair—its library, its garden, its pale brick and gray facings, and above all other embellishments its coquettish turrets, between which, like a rare jewel in an antique setting,

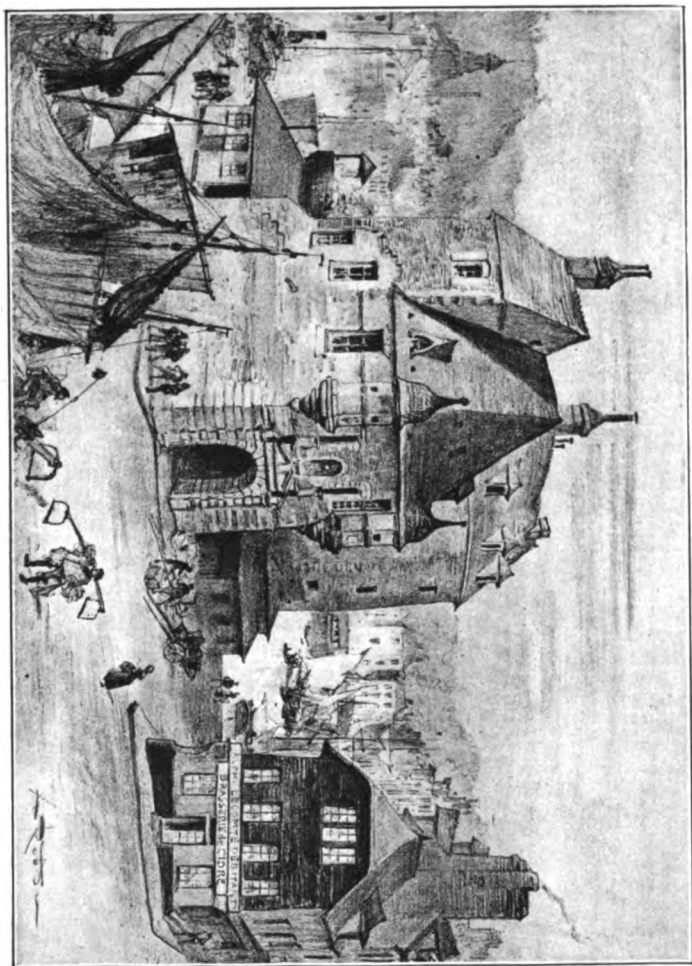
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there stood a Virgin under glass—no—there was no resisting the appeal of so many contradictory features.

Old as is the gateway, we were to find the past incarnate in the living present. The Virgin as one proof that “*La Lieutenance*” was serving an up-to-date usage, yet one as old as the gods. The Virgin, I saw, was shrined in a bower of roses.

La Lieutenance, so named as having been formerly the headquarters of the king’s lieutenant, its foundations being of the fourteenth century, the building itself having been erected in the sixteenth century, was formerly protected by a crenelated bastion and surrounded by a moat.

Le Chemin des Rois, starting at Rouen and going to Caen, passed through Honfleur. What a long procession of notabilities have taken the journey that used to prolong itself into days and even weeks! Charles VIII knew Honfleur, since he must climb its hills, from the port, on his way to Mont-Saint-Michel; Henri IV and his queen, Marie de Médicis, with a numerous suite, saw the town in its seventeenth-century picturesque aspect (1603). Louis XIII followed seventeen years later to besiege Caen, and more than a century later on two travelers who little divined the tragic future in store for them—the Duc de Penthièvre and the lovely Princesse de Lamballe—must have looked forth on that town of 1771 with as amused and curious eyes as do we in noting its ancient features still remaining in this our twentieth century.



LA LIEUTENANCE AT HONFLEUR

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When the Lieutenant sat for its portrait to such masters of the brush as Corot, Daubigny, and François, even then in the mid-nineteenth century the antique face of the beautiful gateway framed in that more medieval town than the one we know, these great artists may well have had the same secret joy of the discovery of Honfleur's rare beauty as Boudin did when he revealed through his pictures at the Salon the magnificence of the Trouville beaches to the amazed Parisians of Napoleon III's day.

Two fishermen were utilizing the steps leading to the "Bibliothèque" as by right of occupancy.

They were mending their nets. They were also smoking their black pipes, as their shuttles glanced in and out of the coarse web. Just such debonair, rugged-faced sons of the sea have sat here, on these same stones, at the very same task, their lips breathing gossip and their breath exhaling the acrid odor of old Calvados—the heady Normandy brandy—as for long centuries others have thus ensconced themselves in this cozy corner.

One of these hardy fishermen slanted an eye, as he worked, across to the quay. A lively dispute was going on between two officers in khaki, in a small military car, and a fishwife; the latter was standing beside her crates of freshly landed mussels. The fishing-boats had just come in and their elderly vendor was holding her own against the sons of Mars.

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The woman's voice rang high and sharp. Her pantomime was as expressive as speech. There were dramatic gestures; the ribbed purplish hands pointed now to the full baskets, with their wet, shining shells, still mud-incrusted, and next the lean arms were pointing skyward, as though to invoke Heaven's connivance in supporting the price demanded.

"She'd fleece a pawnbroker," dryly remarked the observing net-repairer.

The woman had heard the compliment. For now she had won her battle. The dripping basket had been lifted into the car and the officers were off with a laugh.

The fishwife took her time to attend to the less important business of taking up the cudgels for her assailed honor. Her voice now cracked upon the air:

"And you — where do your sous go, you lazy, good-for-nothing louts? Wine-sops that you are, with your wives in rags, and your children crying for bread!"

Down the steep steps of the quay the woman plunged presently, her own sous ringing their merry jingle in her pocket. The men laughed the easy, indifferent laughter of men when attack comes from a quarter outside the home fortress.

II

The church that reminded one of a ship, we found, had been perhaps patterned after one. The interior of Sainte-Catherine's seems the replica of a boat turned

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upside down. Its cradle roof looked uncommonly like an inverted fishing-craft. There is, indeed, a legend in Honfleur that the sailors and fisherfolk had their say when their chief church was a-building. It was to be entirely of wood, like unto those they had seen and knelt in in far-away Norwegian lands; and as nearly as possible the interior roof was to resemble a boat's bottom. The church is in reality of the flamboyant order, built in the later fifteenth-century years. There were some panels below the organ-loft in which were some beautifully sculptured figures carved in the seventeenth-century elaborate style.

More interesting even than these charming sculptures was the living figure of a priest moving about the choir and altar. Never have I seen a priest so entirely at home in his church as was this Monsieur le Doyen. He was setting chairs to rights; he was arranging the vases of flowers on the altar; and he was stepping backward with the air of an anxious and critical housewife to mark the effect of his combination of the gilt candelabra and the tall lilies.

He was calling to an equally active youth, also entirely unabashed by ecclesiastical surroundings, "*Mon petit*, be sure the vestments are made ready!"

The lad dashed down a pair of steps. From subterranean depths there came in response, "They are all set in order, Monsieur le Doyen."

It was *mon petit* this and *mon petit* that until the altar was like unto a bower, finished to the taste of both priest and acolyte. There was next a most

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decorative effect produced by the massing of dozens of flags. These flags of the Allies were dexterously affixed to the stout, rude, wooden nave pillars. We left the two still at work, realizing we must seek in the open the answer to this feverish haste of preparation.

At the Empire church porch the mystery seemed rather to thicken.

Two stout peasants, clad in the black of Sunday attire, were interchanging remarks that hardly savored of piety:

“*Non, la Viezge ne dezouche pas ce soir*” (“The Virgin does not sleep out to-night—she is to rest here”).

“Ah-h! Then Saint-Léonard is to be slighted, it seems.” Both the women laughed, as though the joke had a peculiar relish.

A saint whose feelings were being thus trifled with! A holy lady whose habits at night seemed, at least, to be unusual; a busy priest; an excited acolyte—and two gossiping townswomen who could joke about as good a man as was Saint-Léonard—dead though he had been all these years—it scarcely needed further enlightenment to assure the dullest that something out of the ordinary was to take place in Honfleur.

CHAPTER V

THE FÊTE OF THE VIRGIN

I

HONFLEUR appeared, indeed, to be stirred by some form of unwonted excitement. Hurrying groups of townsfolk, of sailors, and old fishwives were moving upward, onward, as though propelled by common desire to be the first to gain some center of attraction.

All the fisherfolk were deserting the quays. Gaudily attired sailors were issuing from every dark, mysterious alley and blind court with the swaggering gait of men conscious of the effective aid their presence must lend to any festal occasion.

Yet the crowd as a crowd was sober-faced, or it would not have been a Norman gathering. Gaiety and laughter come after a libation to the gods, not before, in this land of practical, material-minded souls. Be it a bargain with Heaven or man, the Norman considers gravity proof of well-bred decorum as well as donning of prudent armor.

On this occasion it was the town rather than its people which gave away the secret of the day. The

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whole town was *en fête*. Triumphal arches, garlands hung from tall Venetian standards, flags of all the Allied nations, of all sizes and shapes, and flowery wreaths made the gray-faced streets and houses wear the air of ancient dames bedecked for some royal visit. In a certain sense, a royal visit it was to be for both Honfleur and the Honfleurais.

The fête was the anniversary of the "Crowning of the Virgin," of the famous little chapel of the Virgin, on the Côte-de-Grâce, above the town.

For over eleven centuries this chapel has been the one to which fishermen and sailors have made pilgrimage to implore protection, on starting forth on a long or dangerous voyage, and to whose shrined Virgin they bent their steps to proffer praise and thanks for answered prayers.

Six years ago this Lady of Mercy was crowned, with a state and splendor worthy of her great, enduring renown. For this Marie of the Côte possesses miraculous powers; she stands high in the heavenly councils, her devotees will tell you; and her chapel, whose walls are hung with ex-votos, proves a record of answered prayers and a potency in the cure of disease second only to her sister at Lourdes.

In these great days of victory, grateful Honfleur and her ecclesiastical guides felt impelled to proffer to the Virgin renewed proofs of their gratitude and reverence. How many a knee has been bent in the dark little chapel, to breath a prayer for a lover, a husband, a son at the front!

I was to have convincing proof of the Virgin's

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protective powers. A wizened, scarlet-faced woman whose work-worn hands told of farm labor had ejaculated, "Dieu! que cela va être beau, la fête!" Finding a sympathetic audience, she continued: "The Virgin, Madame, there's one who answers prayers. It is she who brought my 'man' through Verdun and the Somme. Praise be to her and the Good God! For during all these long four years and more I never lost a day in begging her grace. I toiled up—yes, every day—early as dawn. I walked up that hill to say a prayer, in rain, tempest, and hot sun, and to light a candle. Marie did not forget my Henri," was the farmer-woman's confession as I sat beside her on a keg of nails, close to the quay, waiting for whatever might happen.

The peasant who had chosen to rest her own bones was seated above me on a sack of grain. We were both idly surveying the scene, as I supposed. My neighbor, however, was awaiting her *homme*, she conveyed to me.

A peasant, presently, ruddy of face, jovial of aspect, with smiling blue eyes, and a straw hat tipped at the angle that proclaimed the wearer had not renounced the capture of our sex, advanced toward the stunted, seated figure.

"Eh ben! la vieille—t'es prête? Art ready, old lady? The climb will limber up your old, old bones," and the Henri of the miraculous intervention gave his spouse a rough nudge, winked at my own smile, as he added: "Sitting by the fire makes dead flesh. Give me the trenches for making one supple."

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With a hoarse laugh Henri put his arm in his dull-faced wife's arm, and both were soon lost in the crowd.

The day, I found, was to be replete with happenings.

An old friend suddenly turned the corner of La Lieutenance.

He stared, grasped his béret, to pull his salute properly, as he exclaimed, with a smile that revealed his neglect of dental aid:

"Tiens! Madame is returned."

As by right, he took his seat beside me on the empty grain-bag.

I now knew my fate. I was in for a delightful monologue. As happens rarely with monologists—those captains of conversational trusts—the orgies of talk indulged in by Pierre Léonard Paul Maclou were watched for, intrigued for, were indeed esteemed as coveted privileges by those who knew what Maclou could tell you, once he was at his best.

Maclou was a well-known Honfleur personality.

His twisted face, his too-sudden nose, his debonaire air of finding life a perpetual entertainment, whether on sea or land—this weather-stained, keen-featured fisherman had sat for his portrait to generations of artists.

Maclou knew his value. He realized to the full the importance of embodying the looked-for typical characteristics of a sea-salt and a Norman.

My friend was in good vein.

He was giving me all the news of the town. He

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dwelt at length on the significance and the importance lent to the festival about to take place by the adherence of his brother fishermen to the proposed celebration. This consenting attitude had not been effected, obviously, without some twistings of conscientious scruples. New World fashions in unbelief had played their part in a town where, only a few centuries ago, Protestants and Catholics were cutting one another's throats to prove whose church was the more Christian.

Maclou was teaching me some valuable lessons. He explained at great length how it was possible for a man to present two fronts—well—to the Virgin, for example. He instructed me in the difficult art of hedging. With graphic lucidity Maclou demonstrated how one could guard against losing the Lady's precious guardianship, and yet how one could manage to keep true to certain forms of unbelief.

"Ça va bien—Madame—it goes well enough, once one is safe on land, to sneer and scoff. To say: 'What can a wooden statue do for you—up there on the hill? The Mother of Christ? Who's to prove it?' Well, on land, you see, one's feet stand on firm ground, on ground that doesn't slide about. There are no mountains of the sea to slump down on you, and presently you're done for. One can be as brave then as any poilu on a good road or in a Honfleur street.

"But—nom d'un chien!—once out there"—and the knotted, purplish hand was waved toward the Seine's great mouth, vomiting its waters into the

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sea—"once beyond Mother Seine, out in the open, in that swash, with lightning and thunder for a serenade, on a night when she's in a nasty temper, and one's sense of safety comes back in a jiffy. One runs to port, I can tell you. 'A la merci de la Sainte-Vierge!' I cry louder than the loudest. Oh, mais oui! I'm all for the church and Marie then. It's on land one can afford to be a socialist and against the priests."

There was a brief pause. My friend was extricating a huge red-and-yellow handkerchief from the vasty depths of his bulging pockets. Some interesting and even valuable seconds were lost; Maclou must give due time for the trumpet-like blast every Norman feels is essential to a thorough nasal vacuum-cleaning performance, before he went on; for go on he did. He felt he must justify his own spiritual contradictions by implicating his town.

"Well—you see, we socialists here are on top now. Even the priests must consult us. Why—here—no longer ago than a month when this anniversary was being planned, Monsieur le Doyen himself didn't know whether he could count on us or not. Yes, from the priests and the mayor down, no one knew how we would take it—how we would stand the parading of La Sainte-Marie and the priests through the streets. There was a chance we might turn ugly, you know; that we'd refuse outright to lift a finger to help decorate the town, or keep our women from giving a sou to the show. It's always the women who turn traitor to big things if there's

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a priest and a chance to show themselves in a procession.

"Ben—we disappointed the socialists up in Paris. We were, after all, good citizens of Honfleur first and socialists afterward. There is our answer." Pierre twisted his thumb outward—a thumb as gnarled as a century-old branch. He had turned his eyes to the triumphal arch spanning the town's high street.

"That's one of them. There are many others, as you'll see. But our street beats all the others. Will Madame come and have a look?"

Pierre's gaze now was like that of a child begging a grown-up to see a prized belonging.

La rue Gambetta is, and has been, for longer centuries than even an American millionaire can satisfactorily trace his descent from a follower of William the Conqueror, on the great adventure of the conquest of England—this street of Gambetta has been the home of sailors, mariners, and fisherfolk for centuries and centuries.

From the latticed windows, naval officers in retreat, captains and mates on half-pay, have continued their intimacy with the sea. Low tide, high tide, each and every signal raised on ship or sloop have been as eagerly noted, deemed as exciting an event as was a love-token in youth.

Out from that street sailors and mariners have gone since and before France was wholly France, to Brazil, to the Indies, and to start the new race of men that have glorified their parentage as Cana-

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dians in our own war. The street had flung its flags and its tapestries, had erected its triumphal arches for dukes, princes, the king's ministers, for Henry IV, and Le Roi Soleil.

The arch that led into the Sailors' Street was as unique and original in design as a futurist's attempt to torture beauty into his conception of truth. The arch, however, had the advantage of uniting both realism and beauty. Imagine fine, brown fish-nets draped as curtains; and for curtain sashes new life-preservers wreathed in flowers. Long oars, polished to mirrory brightness, posed upright, as might protective spears, against the sides of the arch; and above, as further decorative adjuncts, there were two huge anchors, painted blue, brilliant with golden stars.

Thus wreathed and garlanded, the arch led the way to a street that was a bower. Where, save from centuries of taste-developed instinct, had rude hands learned to fashion such delicate, such magical effects, from costless material? Here were windows framed in beautifully made wreaths, roses and fruits geometrically set therein to give an impression of such borders as the great artists designed for their costly tapestries. The wreaths were fashioned out of pine boughs, and the flowers and fruits were made of paper.

Maclou was now busily explaining the process of producing such triumphant effects. We were standing in front of an old house that had been turned into a seeming bower of bloom. The harmonious blending of colors and the symmetrical arrangements

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of garlands, stiff Louis XV bouquets set in tall vases, and of wreaths and flags, proclaimed a rare touch and sense of design.

"Joli—hein? Yes. That's my cousin's. She's great on decorations. There she is now, looking out to see who stops to applaud her." A frowzy head and a large frame leaned across the garlanded window. The woman bowed. I was addressing an artist conscious of her talent.

"You have produced a beautiful effect, Madame."

"So pleased you like it—we worked hard," was the throaty, smiling reply as the disorderly head nodded acceptance of the praise.

"We were up till midnight cutting out those paper absurdities," interpolated Maclou, pointing to the very realistic copies of wistaria. Fluttering in the breeze were long garlands of these delicate, graceful spirals. Thus decorated the street Gambetta resembled rather an open-air ballroom than the somewhat squalid abode of fisherfolk.

II

As I made my way, later, up the high street, passing under innumerable triumphal arches, under more and more garlands swung across the narrow thoroughfares, under flags so thickly set that house façades disappeared and only rose-garlanded windows framed and trimmed doorways signaled their residential character, I found all Honfleur repeating this note of beauty.

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Honfleur had been turned indeed into an altar. It was abloom with fragrance; it was aflame with color.

I, in my turn, toiled up the long hill of the Côte-de-Grâce. A beautiful arch, green as the trees that had contributed their quota of beauty to the fête, this was the stately entrance to the hill slope. On its top, on the wide esplanade, nature, man, and art had combined to produce one of those completely harmonious settings for a church festival which only France, I think, still presents.

A grove of admirably grouped elms made a thickly foliated background for the whites and blues of tall Venetian standards. White and blue were also the colors of the pennants floating from their tops. The hill wore the Lady's own colors. Wreaths and garlands, banners and the fleur-de-lis of France, as well as massed tricolor flags, communicated gay notes of brilliance to the state of the century-old trees.

Beyond this decorated hilltop one could look forth on an outlook so vast one might almost hope to see the shining of England's white cliffs. Far as the eye could sweep, toward the west there lay at one's feet, in the foreground, the Seine's wide stretch, with the sea's blues beyond. Havre's smoking chimneys made a misty breath, as though the city had human lungs. Beyond the Sainte-Adresse headland there glittered the whitened steel of the vanishing sea, flashing as it was lost in the descending cup of heaven's blue.

Out upon the quiet air, above this incomparable scene, arose the music of old bells, chiming, halting,

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chiming again the louder. This nearer music was echoed by all the bells in Honfleur down below the hill, ringing their loudest.

All was stir, bustle, confusion among the gathered thousands awaiting the great moment. Thousands there were who must nurse their patience, must stand and wait. Few indeed were the privileged worshippers who could pass beyond the antique porch of the Lady's tiny chapel.

There were priests close to the doors protecting her Grace. There were other priests working like agitated commanders, striving to form the coming procession into some semblance of order. Young girls in the whites of their muslins—these first communicants—must be shown where to stand. A long line of boys, bearing charming little boats, their parents' offering to Marie, proved more amenable to discipline. *Les Enfants de Marie*, hundreds in number, apparently knew their place and part in the day's hard work.

There came a cry louder than all the others. "*Les chanteuses* [the singers]—where are they? Why do they not come forward? Here, you; you must stand here; you must lead the others," was the command of a struggling, ardent-eyed, authoritative young priest, with a face one might have counted on seeing at the head of a regiment. He was next apostrophizing a group of soldiers.

"Ah-h!—you—beau poilu over there, you and your copains, be ready, will you—hein? to help carry the Virgin, when the sailors have had enough,"

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The *beau poilu* turned a pink face as he smiled his assent. The soldiers laughed a hoarse yet smothered laugh. To be thus singled out, to be stared at by hundreds of people, was an ordeal one must carry off with a semi-scoffing air. All the same, they would help carry the Virgin. Monsieur l'Abbé was all right. They knew each other as never would priest and peasants' sons have learned the secret sources of the other's powers, had they not laid huddled together in the mud of the trenches, or had they not found Monsieur l'Abbé there, when they wakened in the sanitary train, to brush the flies away and give a bandaged hand a cigarette. So, of course, these poilus would carry the Virgin.

III

It was no easy task to press one's way through the congested aisles of the little chapel. Yet through that packed mass there pushed and struggled to the altar those contrasting figures whose commingling is one of the chief elements of charm we Anglo-Saxons find in a French crowd.

Soldiers in their blues or khaki; peasants with a coif and apron; young widows trailing their crapes; fishermen in their bérets; elderly châtelaines jingling massive gold watch-chains; sturdy citizens of Honfleur looking their sedatest in top-hat and white tie; farmers in the enforced respectability of a wide-awake and clean shirt—all these were to gain a place before the altar, to mutter their "Ave Maria,"

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and to give the Latin touch of the picturesque to a Latin festival.

Impassive, immobile, serene, the golden-hued Virgin looked down upon her worshippers. On this her great day she had descended from her shrine. She had been placed close to the altar rail, on a broad platform wreathed in roses.

The dim lighting in the choir lent a mystic gloom to the crowned figure. The devotional incense rising from the hearts of her lovers communicated what no smoking incense had power to do. The Lady of Mercy seemed enveloped in an electric atmosphere of devotional ecstasy.

The Lady had her Divine Child in her arms. She wore her tall, golden crown, jewel-studded. From her shoulders there hung a long lace mantle. This womanly garment gave an astonishingly lifelike, a singularly personal, look to the inanimate outlines.

A young soldier who had distanced his group to proffer his prayer and lay his bunch of flowers at her feet was but continuing the long procession of those who had knelt at Marie's shrine.

As long ago as the eleventh century, Robert, Duke of Normandy, William the Conqueror's father, had built for her her first chapel. This, the later chapel of the sixteenth century, was erected by a famous duchesse—the Duchesse de Montpensier. While kings, queens, and many of the great of the earth have paid her their homage, above all others this Lady of Mercy loves her sailors and fisherfolk.

Look aloft, and you perceive dozens of boats, some

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tall and narrow, others small, and some so exquisitely wrought that they must be preserved under glass; others equally wonderful in structure, suspended from the chapel ceiling, that she and all may see them. As for ex-votos, behold the rows upon rows of golden hearts which form a crown above her shrine; see the marble tablets, so thick upon the wall that the wall disappears—whose shining letters attest to all the world the hundreds and hundreds of prayers she has listened to and answered.

And so from this all but unknown hilltop, unknown to the greater world, out across the seas to the cathedral at New York, as from Justinian's "Santa Sophia at Constantinople" to the Kremlin at Moscow, from the glory that was Rheims' to the untouched splendor of Chartres, behold the ever-continuing wonder-working power of this Lady of Mercy—proof above all others of the dynamic force that lies in the secret filters of love and faith.

IV

The crowd was now showing signs of restive impatience. Priests, acolytes, and the Suisse, the latter gorgeous in his scarlet and gold epaulet, were passing in and out of the vestry door. The sacristy, it appeared, was found to be overcrowded. Some elderly priests, beyond the teasing age of ecclesiastical vanity, had brought their surplices into the choir. With a touching simplicity the white, pleated garments were slipped over head and shoulders.

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No one among the congregation appeared to consider this making of a priestly toilet in public derogatory to priestly dignity. "Vous voyez, tout ce passe en famille chez nous—we are all en famille here," whispered my friend and neighbor, with an indulgent smile.

The intimacy between priest and the devout was apparently not limited to earthly relations. "Is Monseigneur here—really here? I heard he was not coming," a lady at my left queried, her anxious brow furrowed with inquiring wrinkles. She had been briskly praying, rosary in hand, but a moment before. She had temporarily stopped intercourse with Heaven to ask her question. She seemed entirely assured of the Deity's courtesy in awaiting her return to her devotional exercises. Since God is always there . . .

V

Now the great moment had come. The Virgin and Child were lifted with amazing ease by her sailor bearers. The golden figure rose surprisingly tall above its flower-decked platform.

On the parvis, out upon the wide expanse of the hilltop, thousands were grouped, awaiting this the great moment—for the culminating point of the festival was this descent of the Virgin from her shrine and her coming out into the open day.

In the clear daylight the Virgin, borne by her sailor lovers, moved along her heights to the sea she was to bless. She passed beneath wreathed

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standards that floated her blues. She was made to bend her head as she swept her golden crown under triumphal arches. The pale sunlight touched, with almost mystic awe, the delicate outlines of a face that moved to tears many among the kneeling throngs.

As the Virgin made her entrance upon the wide scene, before her waiting thousands of worshipers, there was an instant of hushed excitement. A sensible vibration of emotional intensity seemed to stir and thrill the multitude. One might have thought the statue a living presence. Many of her devotees were on their knees; tears were falling from many an eye, and none was ashamed.

"When I see her like that, before us, under the open sky—with her Child on her arm, extending His little hands—as though to bless us, I am convulsed with sobs—my emotions suffocate me. I am glad to weep," was the touching confession of a woman on her knees, close beside me.

There were also deeper, more poignant emotions stirring the hearts of those less devout. The flags that married their reds, white, and blues to the blue and white colors of the Virgin symbolized the glory of Victory. Not one among all these thousands of worshipers or unbelievers but was thrilled with the exultant consciousness of a France freed, of a France at peace.

A year ago, almost to the very day, those of us living along this coast had heard the dread booming of the great guns at the front. Whether we ate,

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or wakened, or walked, or sat, our hearts were leaden. Would the Germans advance beyond Montdidier? Would Amiens be taken? Were that city to fall, then Rouen and all this Norman coast would fall easy victims to German brutality.

Just a year ago the long-distance gun was striving to paralyze Parisian nerves by day, and by night to murder men, women, and children. Were we indeed to fall under German tyranny? We felt the very clutch of that horror-striking grasp at our throats. Only those who have lived through those fearsome months may know what the Allies' victory can mean.

Cymbals, therefore, clash your loudest! Drums, beat as never before! Through yonder brass-voiced trumpets let the breath pass as never before have human lips chorused triumphant song!

For it is not alone the Virgin who walks her way to the sound of praise and prayer.

It is our Wingèd Victory, the Invisible Presence, who is beating the very air with her glad wings, pæans rising exultant, like mounting incense from an antique altar.

VI

In the clear daylight, under the domed trees, the Virgin was being carried along, followed by the vast throng of her adorers, toward the sea.

All eyes were centered on the tall, commanding figure of the bishop. He was directing the procession toward the heights overlooking the waters,

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He was about to bless the sea.

As the sailors turned to bring the statue in line with the ridge of the cliff, a ringing command smote the ear:

“Face au port!”

The bishop's face was suddenly irradiate. His ringed hand, lifted heavenward, was visibly trembling. And on the deeply lined face there came a smile, as though the bishop were saluting a friend. The bishop was indeed saluting one he knew well—he and the sea were old friends; he was himself a fisherman's son. And those rough-visaged sailors, close to his lordship, flashed back from their rigid pose, as bearers of their Virgin, the answering smile of men who knew that the bishop—in giving his command in French and in the seamen's tongue—was claiming the comradeship in which he took, for all his grandeur, such deep and loving pride.

The Benediction, voiced in the Church's tongue, fell upon the momentary, hushed silence like an echo of far-away Roman days, when all the world spoke the Latin which now only priests and savants use.

Down the steep hill the mile-long procession presently wended its way. The Virgin and her cortège were to make a tour of the town.

Honfleur presents a rare, and now a too rapidly vanishing, setting for these open-air Catholic festi-

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vals. The wandering streets, the timbered, worn-faced houses, the slate-covered façades framing the inner dock, the Gothic spires and Renaissance towers of its churches, and the great quays lined with shipping and the fishing-fleet—such a town set in between verdant hills and lovely valleys—where save in France can one discover as harmonious an Old World background?

Against such effective outlines and faded colors there swept, slow and measured of step, all the varied processional splendor.

The antique costume of the Suisse, its scarlets and gold, were in amazing relief against the pale, pink bricks and the faded cement of La Lieutenance. The blues and whites of the choristers; the stately bishop in his purples and costly lace; the browns of the dark-robed Assumptionist Sisters; the creamy snows of a Dominican's habit; and the delicate muslins of the girlish first communicants—all these contrasting notes made an incomparably rare blending with the antique setting of Honfleur.

VII

It was, however, at night, when the Lady was carried back to her own shrine and chapel, that the climax of the day's splendor was attained.

Up the long hill, it was now *les beaux poilus* who were her honored bearers. Choir-boys, priests, Monseigneur himself, toiled up the steep ascent to see her fitly enshrined. Behind the cortège the brown-

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and-black-habited nuns—all now whiter of face—and the great army of the Lady's adorers—sailors, fishermen, gentlefolk, townspeople, fishfolk—thousands and thousands were filling the roadway.

The brilliant summer day had paled. Twilight was closing its violet and amber-tinted windows. Faint stars were pricking the purplish skies to add celestial lighting to the lights that were now turning each human face—all these thousands of human shapes—into a mystic, etherealized, an all but transfigured host.

The long day's emotional excitement had intensified the pietistic fervor. Hymns were voiced with deeper feeling, the notes of many more male voices were communicating a richer depth of tone. The night air rang with "*Marie, ayez pitie de moi.*" There was exaltation in the long rows of faces. Eyes were preternaturally bright. There were spots of heightened color on elderly cheeks, and though steps sometimes faltered, all moved as though worked by some inward, emotional volition.

Every worshiper carried his or her candle. The yellow, twinkling lights lent a strange and unearthly glamour to the great spectacle. The nearer faces and forms that were thus lighted, as they passed, were aglow with sudden brilliance, the features were accentuated, and the eyes were of an amazing softness.

Farther down the hill the yellow candle-lights were growing paler as the mounting shapes themselves, in the faintly illumined distance, were lost in the blue of the night.

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And before the parvis of her chapel the Virgin was held aloft for a last survey.

A sudden blaze lit up the crowded hilltop. The nearer woods were a scarlet grove, aflame. A blue world presently succeeded to the deeper reds; and then violet tree-trunks and tree-branches melted into the blacks of the night.

The sea would not be outdone. A fiery fountain, star-gemmed, flashed skyward to fall in sparklets over the dusky waters. Rockets sent their blaze into the arches of the night, bidding the stars to pale before their startling blues and flaming yellows. Beyond, as though in sympathetic answer to this last salute, Havre's harbor lights stabbed the night with their own white and crimson darts.

And all the air was full of song.

It was to the voices of these singing thousands, to ringing chimes, to a transformed earth, sky, and sea, that the Lady was laid to rest in her shrine.

Gods die, but their rites survive. Is it only to Latin countries the great festivals of Delos, of Athens, of Delphi, have banded down across the dead centuries this antique sense of grace, of a belief in the joyous marriage of color, beauty, gaiety, song, and prayer, in the worship of God?

To this all but unknown people of Honfleur has been passed the torch of that vivifying flame that lights the altar of beauty and thus incites to religious emotivity. Honfleur still lives brilliantly through her festal power, as once she lived triumphantly by virtue of her importance.

CHAPTER VI

THE STORY OF HONFLEUR

I

ON the day following the fête I was to find that the story of this little town of Honfleur one may liken to the illumined pages of an old missal; like certain saints, she also has passed through persecution and martyrdom. There are pages of her history that should be recorded in letters of gold, for in her great days Honfleur played a brilliant part in the progressive glories of France.

For Americans and English alike there is a commemorative tablet affixed to the walls of the picturesque Lieutenantance which arrests the eye:

Le 3 Septembre, 1899, à la Mémoire de Samuel de Champlain, la Société du Vieux Honfleur a consacré ce souvenir avec des marins et des équipages du Port de Honfleur.

Il explora l'Arcadie et le Canada de 1603 à 1607; parti du même port en 1608 il fonda la ville de Québec. Embarquements de Champlain à Honfleur: Avril 1603—13 Avril 1608—18 Avril 1610—Avril 1615—Avril 1617—Mai 1620.¹

¹ On the 3d of September, 1899, the Société du Vieux Honfleur consecrated to the memory of Samuel de Champlain this tablet, together with the sailors and crews of the port of Honfleur.

He explored Arcadia and Canada from 1603 to 1607; departing from the same port, he founded, in 1608, the city of Québec. The sailings of de Champlain from Honfleur were: April, 1603—April 13, 1608—April 18, 1610—April, 1615—April, 1617—May, 1620.

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The happy chance of being able to present the *milieu* of so memorable a historical event as this setting forth of a great adventurer is not often given to a writer. The old houses and quays of Honfleur seem to have preserved their seventeenth-century setting with felicitous sense of their importance.

Those slanting, narrow, slate-faced houses crowding the inner basin—just beyond La Lieutenance—on these now ancient dwellings Champlain must have looked his last as he made each of his seven departures for the wilderness. Yonder is the Gothic church, now the Honfleur Museum, where he may have knelt in prayer; the dim courts and evil-smelling alleys are still here, in various parts of the town, whence went forth the crews he recruited for his adventurous journeys.

The Honfleur of that now far-away seventeenth century was seized as with an intoxicating madness to depart for those beckoning lands beyond the seas. “Départs pour le Canada” are still to be read in every old will in Honfleur and its adjacent parishes.

Fleets, vessels, ships of all sorts set sail for this “New France.” In that feverish time the nights as well as the days of every citizen of Honfleur were colored with flashing hopes of coming wealth; gold and silver were to flow, a Pactolian stream straight from the mines in Canada into the open pockets of these money-loving Normans.

As the wet sands reflect at sunset the brilliant sunset hues, every adventurous Norman, before his mental eye, saw reflected the gorgeous, luminous

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clouds of fairy fortunes. It was as easy to secure a crew for Canada as a century before it had been to recruit an army for the pillaging of churches in the war against Protestants.

The very names of the ships that set their sails were an open avowal of the hopes and fluttering dreams of the avarice-minded men that went to take ship for the New World: *Don-de-Dieu*, *L'Espérance*, *Bon-Espoir*, departed for the coast of Arcadia, with contracts from Henri IV for "exclusive privileges of traffic, provided they founded an establishment." The first attempt to establish this coveted right was, as we all know, at Tadoussac on the Sagouny.

If crews were as easily recruited as money was found for the arming and equipping of the ships, the one great need of rib-born man that pitying Deity accorded to Adam in creating the rib-born Eve—this need seems, for the first few years of this emigration to "the land of savages," to have been forgotten. No French women seem minded to turn explorers.

Colbert, the great Minister under Louis XIV, who thought of everything, devised a clever scheme for peopling this "New France."

He wrote to the Archbishop of Rouen: "As they [young girls] may be found in the suburbs of Rouen, I believe you will consider it worth your while to allow me to implore you to use your authority and the credit you have with the curés of twenty or thirty of these parishes, to see if they can find in each, one

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or two young girls disposed, voluntarily, to go to Canada to be married."

Here was an appeal as irresistible to the priest as to the Norman maiden. Every priest believes in the holy cause of match-making. And as for the unwedded girls, behold they flocked from every town and hamlet. The only qualifications being a good reputation, sound health, and powers of endurance—dozens of Norman girls could prove themselves fit for acceptance.

In outlining this, his ingenious scheme, Colbert eliminated Parisians. "They would be too delicate for household work and the culture of the soil," he wrote, somewhat disdainfully.

Eighty-two marriageable girls presently took ship at Honfleur. The cargo, however, of one hundred and twenty trained workmen, their tools and instruments, as well as two superb Normandy stallions, were to prove serious rivals to the blooming, robust Norman maidens.

On landing at Quebec, the eighty-two marriageable girls, all aflame with curiosity to see what manner of men were to be these their future husbands, trembling with impatience or fear, a-quiver with expectancy, were met by scarce a glance of interest. The little landing-dock was indeed crowded with hardy pioneers and with fierce, feather-crowned savages. But the cheers and rapturous enthusiasm were not for the paling maidens, but were reserved for the trained workmen, for their tools, and above all others for the two Normandy stallions.

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One tries to picture the feelings and the faces of those marriageable maidens! Was it, forsooth, for this, to see the points of a horse appreciated, that they had left family, the home village, which, however poor in suitors and prospects, was still sufficiently civilized to put women at least on a par with horses? Imagine the heartburnings of those eighty-two marriageable girls! What collective despair! What a sickening sense of failure, what a hurt to the vanity that, against all the agonies of the long and painful sea voyage, had upheld their little balloon of confident hopes!

Happily, the poets will have it, that man, since Adam, invariably has proved his atavistic instinct to return to his first love. According to Genesis, before biblical critics wrecked the Garden of Eden, Adam loved Eve before ever he did the prehistoric horse. This may be taken for granted.

* Those Norman Canadians were not only true sons of Adam, but also still true Normans. Their trading instinct must quickly have leaped to note the plain, staring fact, that whereas there were only two stallions, there were eighty-two girls waiting for husbands. Eighty bachelors, therefore, could afford to turn indifferent eyes on the stallions, since only two owners could possess them.

One evokes the gay scene of the choosing, of the tucking of a smiling maiden under the masculine arm. And off for the rude hut in the wilderness!

All hail! I say, to those courageous Norman girls whose glorious destiny it was to be the first among

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European women to pass on the torch of bravery, handed down from their Norse ancestors to their Canadian descendants. It has been a torch upheld with such steadfast, heroic hands as to make, in our recent war, the very name of Canadian the synonym for valor.

Monsieur Sorel¹ states:

This infusion of French blood, young and valiant, explains the extraordinary development of our race in Canada, the fidelity of this race to the language, to the religion, to the traditions of its provincial origin. These women brought with them that which was most solid in France—the hearthstone—whose flame does not die. Justice has not been done, in these particulars, to the part that is due these Frenchwomen.

II

To every American and Englishman, the names of those who followed Champlain into the *rendez-vous des sauvages* are as household words. There was Dupont who made more than twenty voyages to the Terre Neuve, starting from these Honfleur docks. There were Hamelin, Chaudet, La Salle, and Chauvin, the latter being among the few whose golden dreams came true.

There were also those great men, great as organizers, intrepid as travelers and pioneers, whose reign of equity and mercy is still a legend among the Indian tribes, while Christianized America has all but forgotten what it owes to their Order—to these repeated journeyings of the Brethren des Récollets.

As there is a little of everything in Normandy,

¹ Sorel, *Pages Normandes*.

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so in Honfleur there are recording pages of every period in French history.

A famous French historian has said delightfully of a bit of furniture in his Honfleur house: "There is a vitrine in a certain provincial drawing-room where nothing in it has been changed for years. When we were children we were told not to touch anything, 'these things are bibelots.' Later, we said to our grandchildren, 'Don't break them, they are souvenirs!'"

Honfleur may be likened to this French vitrine. It is crowded with souvenirs.

You may walk to the Place Thiers or round the rare old architectural "souvenir" of the Lieutenantance and reconstruct the ancient walls and fortifications which the growing town erected to defend itself in 1204. During the Hundred Years' War Honfleur was sacked by the English king, Edward III, and our own war has taught us objective lessons in the fine point to which the art of pillaging may be carried.

Those to whom command of the sea means the corner-stone of all territorial conquest can revel in the accounts of a certain fleet that put out from the Honfleur docks, this particular expedition of 1451 being that of Norman nobles wearied of English oppression.

Honfleur navigators later rounded the Cape, and others knew Brazil and discovered Newfoundland as early as 1505. Neither was India unknown to these *maîtres experts de la mer*.

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The wars of religion and that political war of "the pouters"—La Fronde—between them all but ruined Honfleur. The Duc d'Aumale, heading the Catholics, chased the Protestants up to the very tower of the charming old church of Saint-Léonard, which can still be seen as it was then.

The frieze crowning the tower, with its bagpipes and flutes, a curious decorative ornamentation, would seem to symbolize the joys of life and of heavenly recompense. Yet this tower was the last refuge of the Protestants of whom Honfleur was the last Norman Protestant camp. The besieged fought valiantly, rushing to the tower only as a last desperate venture.

Saint-Léonard still stands at the very portal to welcome you. Two little captives whose chains arrest the eye tell you the saint's history; for this saintly man held captivity in horror, to the degree that he wooed it for himself to free others. He went to Africa; bought off, when in funds, the galley-slaves; freed one; and became his substitute when the purse was empty.

Thus does the scroll of history unroll itself here in this ancient Norman town. From the far-away days when that master statesman Richelieu requisitioned the Honfleur fleet to begin the siege of New Rochelle, we follow successively the Bourbon kings and their Ministers planning new docks and granting the town new privileges, up to the electrifying visit of Napoleon I, after the treaty of Amiens.

Napoleon, like Colbert, also thought of every-

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thing. He could spare time to plan new ship-building docks, in a town so unknown nowadays to most tourists its very name recalls not a single stirring episode of French history.

Yet, turn the pages of French history and you will find nearly every great minister, general, king, or emperor, from Duquesne and Colbert, from Louis XIV to Napoleon, come to Honfleur on this business of enlarging docks, or of granting privileges, or of ordering the creation of huge magazines for the drying of salt to preserve fish.

In one of your tours through this interesting little town you will seek the museum. It is filled with relics of old Honfleur. In a street reminiscent of the walled port, to the right of the Gothic church, the latter now utilized as a museum, you will see, among beautiful brocades, postilion's boots of enormous size and weight, costumes with the delicate embroideries of the Bourbon periods, quaint old looms, and a remarkably realistic reproduction of a shop of "ye olden time." There are two objects which will reveal one of the blacker pages of Honfleur's history.

A certain reduced copy of an eighteenth-century ship will be pointed out as "a slave-ship." And some exceedingly well-woven cottons, pasted into a large book, will be shown "as the cottons with which Honfleur traders bought niggers."

These Rouen cottons were indeed temptingly offered in exchange for a growing negro lad or child, or for a husband whose devotion to his

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dusky wife would go to the lengths of selling himself into bondage to bedeck a wife in foreign-woven splendor.

Slave-traders, however, were not always restricted to commercial dealings in capturing their "load." All the horrors, the brutality, and the terrors which the innocent and ignorant black race were made to suffer, during the disgraceful slave-trading days, were endured by those captured and sold by Honfleur captains and traders.

One incident, in the disgraceful history of this inhuman traffic, lightens the fancy to dwell upon. In one of the cargoes from the African coast a young prince, from Gambia, was found to have been inadvertently captured. The prince had been indiscreetly wandering about the shores of his uncle's kingdom. Since there was nothing either in the youthful heir's appearance, color, or demeanor to distinguish him in the eyes of traders bent on seizing any booty of the right complexion, the prince was brutally attacked, hustled on board the slave-ship, and flung into the hold.

Some of his fellow-captives recognized their king's nephew. Here was a prize too rich to be left at Port Royal, along with other job lots. The prince was taken to Honfleur, where for some months his black face and his royal person, clothed in the Honfleur cotton bluejeans, coat, vest, and trousers, were the daily joy of the wharves and quays. He was finally sent back to his kingly uncle, who returned thanks to the French authorities for the care taken

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of the young prince, "whose health was of the most flourishing"!

Will you have a gayer picture of Honfleur in those its greater days?

These were days when the arrivals of the lumbering coaches from Rouen or from Caen was an event; when also to cross over to Havre there was at your pleasure a sailboat, in which you took passage at the risk of tempestuous weather or of being becalmed.

The Honfleur of those earlier days was gayer, more brilliant in color, and lighter of heart than now. Song and dance were as common to the Normandy peasant, on fête-days and at weddings, as nowadays their less lively descendants go to Trouville and Deauville to watch others dance the "fox-trot" and "jazz." Those earlier Normans had a better sense of how feet should move to quicken brain and incite to true merriment.

Did a ship come in from the Indies or Brazil or Newfoundland, behold! the quays were crowded. All Honfleur was *en fête*. What a moving, entrancing picture the staring eyes of crews, mates, and captains beheld as their ship came to port!

There were hundreds of Norman maidens fluttering about, waving hands and handkerchiefs! Tall, lacy Normandy caps framed faces aglow with youth and health; striped skirts were revealers of the red or yellow stockings and bright shoe buckles. The

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bodices, laced across gauze-covered bosoms, made eyes glisten and warm. "Twenty love-conceited knots" were tied in honor of the day.

The commercial traveler and the leveling process of democratic principles have decreed that the peasant, the villager, the rentier, the bourgeois, and the rich must be garbed as nearly alike as purse and taste permit.

On the arrival of the tidal boat from Havre, a Honfleur crowd will always be found awaiting the passengers, and while you will see hands still waved to returning travelers, it will be only the same more or less dun-colored crowd one sees from the docks of New York to these ports of France. Here at Honfleur, at least, fishwives, fishermen, sailors, negro stokers, and invariably one old Norman, in an old-time cap, give to those leaning over the top-wall color and race variety.

CHAPTER VII

A GRANDSON OF LOUIS PHILIPPE

HONFLEUR was living along in the quiet of its provincial calm. Its business pulse was beating with satisfying regularity. The ships from Norway were coming into its docks laden high with timber; the fishermen were netting big hauls; orchards and vegetables were filling full the thousands of little boxes that twice weekly were sent over to England; and townsfolk and farmers were therefore smoking the pipe of peace and prosperity.

There was enough of human depravity, between the drunkenness abroad in streets and along the wonderful Normandy lanes and roads, between the enlivening tales of conjugal infidelities, between the purging of one's soul of sins of omission and commission at *Paques* (Easter) and Christmas, and the following of the *Fêtes Dieux*, in summer, to keep even sluggish souls from attacks of moral turpitude.

It was into such a little town that in the year 1910 Honfleur was stirred to its very center; a royal prince had bought a château on the Côte-de-Grâce!

The prince presently became endowed with virtues and qualities only less remarkable than was his reputed vast wealth. A Norman, while preaching

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perfection in virtue, can always accept second-hand moral excellencies, provided the pockets be well lined.

In the case of Prince Czartorizski there seemed to be no necessity of such easy acceptance of human deficiencies. The prince was young, handsome, extraordinarily clever, *un lettré*, and was also a great traveler. His estates, in Silesia—a country as vague to the Honfleur mind as Timbuctoo—were, it was whispered, as extensive as a province. There were also princely palaces, it was rumored, in St. Petersburg, in Paris, and in Moscow. As the ball of gossip rolled on, this charming young descendant of the Orleans family was soon made possessor of half the earth's available lands.

For a great prince to send a secretary, librarian, a man of consequence, and his *chef*, a reputed *cordons bleu*, along the whole length of the Normandy coast to search for a suitable hiding-place for a library—"parbleu—ça—c'est épatant!" was Honfleur's verdict.

No one, it was agreed, over the evening glass of cider, or of old calvados,¹ save a Pole and a prince would ever have conceived of such a project. The narrow provincial brain suddenly seemed to expand merely by dwelling on such folly; for books—what did books bring in, as revenue, if one kept them? To a shrewd, money-loving, *sous-handling* Norman, to possess meant something to sell. Whether it be cattle, or produce, or one's daughter—although, of course, one didn't call sticking out for a good husband for one's girl and her *dot* a bargain—"the same

¹ Apple brandy.

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as trading horses or a cow"—still possessions to a Norman mean always something that can be bought or sold.

To learn that the length of the Seine shores, as had the Normandy coast, had been visited by the prince's confidential men, that Honfleur had been chosen above all other towns, that the Côte-de-Grâce was decided upon as the preferred site, confirmed the citizens of Honfleur in the agreeable conviction that Honfleur was the most beautiful of French towns. For centuries the townsfolk had consciously carried about with them this soothing knowledge. To find the truth thus borne in on others—"on one who goes around the world"—is always pleasant proof that large minds were working outside of Normandy.

Thus was the purchase of the prince's château discussed, by high and low.

Little by little, something of the prince's history became known.

Prince Witold Czartorizski was no less a personage, it appeared, than a great-grandson of the French king, Louis Philippe. His grandmother had been that tragic figure of a princess who had sued obdurate revolutionaries to keep the French crown in the family. As Princesse Marguerite d'Orléans she had her own sad page in the history of the Bourbons: the accidental death of her young husband, the Duc d'Orléans, heir to the kingdom, was the first blow to the hopes of the Orleans branch of the Bourbon dynasty.

French through his Orleans ancestors, the prince's

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nationality was Polish, his father, Prince Ladislaw Czartorizski, being a descendant of the Jaquellons, kings of Poland.

On the death of his parents the young prince and his elder brother, Adam, went to live with their aunt, Princess Dziallyanska, in an old and beautiful hotel, the Hôtel Lambert, in the remote Ile de Paris. In this islet of old Paris here and there one still finds curiously interesting and magnificent old houses, survivals of the great periods of fine Parisian houses.

Here this lady, a woman of exceptional gifts and intellectual tastes and attainments, collected year after year a great library—now well known as one replete with rare and unique editions, with manuscripts and missals of such beauty and value as to make bibliophiles despair of their ever coming into the market, since the Czartorizskis can afford to keep them.

On the death of the Princess Dziallyanska, her heir, Prince Czartorizski, sold her hotel to his brother, and looked about for a fitting place in which to house his treasured library. Wishing to be near the sea and in the country, he sent his librarian on a tour of inspection along the Normandy coast.

The choice, as has been stated, fell upon the château on the Côte-de-Grâce—that nobly set upland running from Honfleur to Barneville above the coast road of the well-known Route de Trouville.

A romantic incident connected with the most fatal events in the history of his Orleans ancestry was revealed to the prince as having had this very

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château and its pavilion and grounds as the scene of the tragedy. The story of the flight of the King Louis Philippe and his wife the queen, given in the following pages, narrates this rare coincidence—one quite unknown to the prince at the time of his purchase of the Honfleur château.

The prince himself took on, in time, the vague outlines of a legendary character. While the château was beautified by additions, while some of its rooms were said to be decorated "in royal style," while park and gardens were rescued from neglect and made to frame, in fitting beauty, this princely domain, the master himself was never seen. If he came, it was to make a stay as brief as it was stealthy. He had vanished before it was known he had actually stopped for a night. Those who were fortunate enough to meet him enlarged on his charm of manner, on his cleverness, on his personal attraction. "Mais, c'est un sauvage—il ne veut voir personne." "C'était un Bénédictin," said Monseigneur Lemonjuer, in speaking of the friend he had lost.

And then one day, in the lonely solitude of an over-peopled hotel, this cultivated "savage" who would "see no one" was forced to meet face to face the relentless Reaper. Death took the charming prince unawares; this lover of great books, this eager reader of earth's pages, this talented and clever wanderer who was always at home wherever he went, was at rest, where neither books nor possessions are needed, in soul-land.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ODYSSEY OF A KING AND A QUEEN

I

ON a certain February morning as the skies were palely tinted, opening the short day, an aged couple, an old gentleman and an old lady, descended from a cart, in front of a *pavillon*, on the Côte-de-Grâce, the hill above Honfleur. This pavilion was a small, one-story, two-roomed cottage fronting the road. The château was set in a grove of trees in the park, overlooking the coast.

As soon as the cart stopped the two travelers alighted. Both seemed overcome with fatigue; yet both, in spite of their advanced years, appeared to be endowed with a vigor that was accentuated by a certain unmistakable air of great distinction and of authority.

A gardener, named Racine, coming forward with haste born of curiosity, unlocked, somewhat nervously, the great gates of the park. He had received notice that two such guests might be expected. His master, Monsieur de Perthuis, being absent, Racine did the honors of the small dwelling with deferential, rustic courtesy.

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As the travelers entered the cottage one might have seen a look of immense relief replace an air of anxious apprehension that even a grand manner could not wholly conceal.

The gardener, meanwhile, proved, once within the security of the pavilion, that he knew how to serve his king.

The two mysterious travelers were none other than the King and Queen of France—Louis Philippe and Marie Amélie.

Racine, the gardener, had the quick Norman wit. A cheap portrait of the king, in his kitchen, had revealed to him the identity of his two royal guests.

In this unpretentious dwelling the royal fugitives for several anxious days were to live in two tiny rooms; and they were to be preyed upon by all the agitated fluctuations of fear, of hope, and of plans formed only to be abandoned.

What tragic adventures had these two elderly sovereigns experienced in the past few days, what fatigue, and what deprivations!

As in the mad days of Louis XVI, as in the turbulent uprisings of the people in 1830, when Charles X made his luckier escape—happy he to have kept his head on his royal shoulders!—so had this last of the Bourbon French kings heard the dread thunder of his people's cries roll up in threatening chorus below the Tuileries windows.

With the ever-present memories before these two latter monarchs of how crowned heads are treated when France decides it is tired of crowns, when that



KING LOUIS PHILIPPE
From a painting by Winterhalter

THE ODYSSEY OF A KING AND A QUEEN

“madness of choler” that leads to bloody revolutions has gone through the blood of man, what shame was the specious Bourbon argument for any monarch to realize that flight, that an imperious longing for safety is no disgrace, but the natural, the paramount obsession? The scaffold which Louis XVI had mounted every succeeding sovereign saw as plainly as though he knew it still to be erect on the Place Louis XV. This was the awful specter that rose to take ominous shape each time the seditious cries rang loud of “*A bas le roi!*” “*Aux Tuileries!*” “*Aux Tuileries!*”

This constitutional monarchy of Louis Philippe was to find no more stability than had the reign of Napoleonic ideals. The French nation had essayed already, in the four years since Waterloo, three sets of kingly rulers. The nation and the allies had, before Waterloo, restored the brother of the martyr—Louis XVI—to the throne. Louis XVIII was restored to his people after the famous Hundred Days, reigning in all from 1815 to 1824. With the Second Restoration every one—the French nation, the allies, England, and even the king—felt secure. St. Helena could never give the world the surprise the island of Elba had furnished. Napoleon was far away. Europe could breathe freely.

“The King of France may die, but he must not be ill,” was the philosophic summing up of the knowledge Louis XVIII had gained, in his nine years’ reign. He knew he was committing the sin of dying slowly, some months before the end came.

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"May Charles X take care of the crown for this child," said the expiring monarch on his death-bed. He could foresee, in the tragic murder of the Duc du Berri, the little Duc de Bordeaux's father, all the dangers that had opened up before the legitimate Bourbon dynasty.

Charles X, his successor, took care chiefly of his own soul and of the church. Like certain more modern potentates, he felt assured of the guidance of the heavenly powers in assuming to reign autocratically.

There were, alas! more mundane powers at work.

"*Nous dansons sur un volcan*" ("We are dancing on the edge of a volcano") cried a certain Salvaudf, at a ball given by the Duc d'Orléans. And the volcano burst forth presently, pouring its fiery flood against despotism, against Bourbon claims to "*la majorité, c'est le roi.*" The real majority soon disposed, by barricades, by the popping off of guns, by the mighty strength of revolution, of the king who deemed himself superior to his people.

After six short years of wearing of the crown Charles had insisted should be blessed by the Pope's nuncio at Rheims, Charles X had ceased to reign.

Then came the turn of the Duc d'Orléans—Louis Philippe. He was the head of the younger branch of the Bourbons. He had won out, against the Duchesse de Berri, the adventurous widow of the dead legitimate heir, and of the young Duc de Bordeaux, his son and posthumous child. He had won, but if one must look at the end of a man's life

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before one can call him happy, the story of the flight of Louis Philippe and the queen to Honfleur lifts the veil from the image of crowned happiness.

After the oft-changed wearers of the French crown had vanished, the crown having been worn eighteen years by Louis Philippe, behold once more the Seine is to become the *mise-en-scène* of a tragic episode in the fortunes of a French king.

II

In Paris, in this year of 1848, revolution was already stalking the streets. The still illusioned king in his palace thought to calm the popular madness by signing scraps of paper. Concession after concession "to the people" having been made, Louis Philippe believed the wild fever in the veins of the revolutionaries would calm down. Each signature was, in reality, but the king's quicker signing of his own coming fall.

Nothing more, it seemed to the king, was there left for him to concede; he had yielded all the power vested in him to those clamoring for still more.

"After the review,"¹ Monsieur Lenôtre tells us, in his graphic recital of those last days of the king in France, "the king, taking refuge in his study, in the lower story of the Tuileries, sank into an arm-chair. There he remained, his hand on his forehead; the queen and the princesses were in the adjoining

¹ The king had held a review of troops in the Place du Carrousel.

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salon. In low tones they whispered, 'What is to be done?' No one knows; every one waits."

Politicians, high dignitaries, go and come; they form groups; Thiers, Lamoricière, Odilon Barrot, Rémusat, Crémieux, the Maréchaux Gerard, Bugeaud, Soult—every one is silent. They await the firing that is coming nearer and nearer.

Emile de Girardin, who comes up from the street, urges the king to abdicate in favor of his grandson, under the regency of the Duchesse d'Orléans.

The princess throws herself on her knees and implores her father-in-law to resist a little longer. The queen sobs:

"No, no, my friend, you will not do that! Better to die than to go out of that door!"

The Duc de Montpensier, on the contrary, counsels immediate abdication.

The old gentleman, distracted, undecided, of a dozen minds, asks counsel of all those about him, with his anxious eyes:

"Is it true that all defense is impossible?"

"Impossible!" is the implacable reply from many voices.

Then, stretching his hand toward his desk, Louis Philippe proceeds, with deliberation, to arrange his paper and his pen.

"Faster! Faster!" cry the impatient ones about him.

"Gentlemen, I am hurrying as fast as I can."

"Sire," interrupted the Duc de Montpensier, "I implore you to hurry!"

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"I have always written slowly—this is not the moment to change my habits."

In a firm hand, in large letters, the king traced the lines:

I abdicate this crown that the will of the nation had placed upon my head in favor of my grandson the Comte de Paris. May he succeed in the great task which this day is imposed on him.

This 24th of February, 1848.

LOUIS PHILIPPE.

The paper was all but torn out of the now ex-king's hands. In the twinkling of an eye, as it must have seemed to those of the royal family who were still under the spasm of their conflicting emotions, the palace room was emptied. So quick are courtiers to feel the receding tide of royal favor—so sensitive to the glacial touch of windy danger!

Meanwhile, in the king's stables, then situated in the rue Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre,¹ where now we find the gardens of the Carrousel, postilions, grooms, and stablemen were in the throes of the greatest excitement. Orders had been given to have the royal carriages made ready. "Every possible comfort and traveling commodity must be thought of," were the orders; "each carriage must be fitted out for a journey of several days."

The crowd of grooms and stablemen were told that the royal family were to spend several days at Saint-Cloud.

With not undue haste, and with that care and

¹ Lenôtre, *Les Derniers Jours*, etc.

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precision due to the high class of these aristocratic vehicles, the "Saverne," the king's own protected carriage, as well as the imposing "Moselle," and the "Tamise," for the prince and princesses, with a whole train of lesser *calèches* with such resounding names as "Seine-Inférieure," "L'Italienne," "La Française," "Cérès," "Minerve"—for royal and court carriages, as late as 1848, were institutions on ponderous wheels, much to be revered, solemnly baptized, answering to their august names—these slow-moving, showy vehicles were being made ready. Enough horses for a king's journey were not too speedily harnessed. There had to be eight for the king's own carriage, six for the princes' carriages and for the maids of honor, while other court functionaries had to put up with two steeds.

In the ears of the hostlers, as in those of the gaudily costumed postilions, impatiently tapping their bright riding-boots with their gold-mounted whips, there rose up from the Place du Carrousel the welcoming shouts of the populace; they knew that the king was holding the review of his troops. Neither troops, nor postilions, nor hostlers, nor all Paris knew it to be the last review to be held by a strictly French legitimate king.

Hairon, a young pickeerer, resplendent in his royal scarlets, reassured by this ovation, led the way; he sat his saddle as firmly as though cast in bronze on one of the eight horses drawing the king's carriage.

The great gates of the stables flew open. The long

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line of the superb carriages followed one after the other. The street was then filled with the moving mass of color, with the noise of clanking bits, of clinking silver resounding to the perfectly trained steps of the high-bred steeds. The few people about stared, as for eighteen years they had stared, half in awe, half in delight—eyes dazed with the splendor of the show—yet half hating it all, since kings were beginning it was felt, to cost too much, and they governed so little!

All at once something happened! At a turn in the street a band of men, only twenty-five, in hiding, sprang forward. Raising their guns, they fired. Four horses fell, a stampede ensued, the crowd gathered, postilions scattered; one of the latter who ran for his life was caught, killed, stripped, and left for dead. This was the touch of human bestiality that others had been waiting for to begin their own orgy of destruction.

Two of the famous carriages—famous indeed since their very names come down to us—the “Moselle” and “Saverne,” were to end their career in flames. Straw was found somewhere, was rolled under the splendid vehicles, and crack! crack! sizzling, the fiery spirals ran up, caught painted wood, emblazoned crowns, padded interiors, velvet cushions, and silk curtains, and a few moments later all that was left of these gorgeous vehicles was a mass of charred remains, the smoking ashes of royal magnificence any gamin might have stooped to handle, as he cried, “*Cré Dieu—ça piquet!*”

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III

The king, meanwhile, surrounded by his family, and by the three friends who had remained faithful to him—by Lastyrie, Crémieux, and Montalivet—was listening, in a maze, to words that seemed to have no meaning for him. Having signed the fatal paper, all power of action seemed to have been suspended.

“You must fly, you must fly!” Crémieux was crying. The king still stared.

“Indeed—you must go—and quickly!” This time the king understood. The clamor beneath the windows—the cries, shouts, angry yells—that ominous, mounting wave of discord of a people enraged, of bestiality at the breaking-point—yes, at last the king understood.

With a single gesture he removed his general’s hat, the queen instinctively tearing off decorations, gold braid, and epaulets. A large cloak and a low crush hat were handed him. The king had presence of mind enough to clutch a portfolio beside him, on the table; and he passed another, one crammed with papers, to his valet. A sign to his wife, whom some of those about had garbed for her setting forth, and then the strange group was out in the Tuileries gardens.

Those of us who stroll, on a fine day, from the flower-full gardens opposite the flamboyant statue of Gambetta do not count the distance nor the time it takes to reach the great gates that, wide open

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now, guard these charming Tuileries, tree-domed alleys. But—we were not flying for our lives! We were not hearing the shouts and cries in our ears of an infuriated crowd. We were not shivering as the growling thunder of sedition, of insurrection, rolled nearer and nearer. Were those about one crying, “Be quick! be quick!” while the very air seemed electrified with the lightning darts of death-dealing menace—then, hurry, press, rush as one might, and the way down those long alleys, the following of the curves of the Bassin—where one stops nowadays to watch the golden-haired children launch their mimic, white-winged fleet—ah me! but every step would seem to be leaden and one’s very breath would fail one.

This was the hard journey King Louis Philippe found before him, once he had left the comparative safety of the Tuileries Palace walls. With his aged wife clinging to his arm, his children and grandchildren hurrying their footsteps, the faithful valet, Thuret, bending under the weight of the huge portfolio; with the devoted friends and followers, Crémieux, General Dumas, and, to the glory of art be it recorded also, Ary Scheffer—this last remnant of the Bourbon courts directed its agitated flight toward the Place de la Concorde.

Once outside the gates, the entire cortège came to a startled, to an affrighted standstill.

Where were the royal carriages? Where were the resplendent “Saverne,” the “Moselle,” and the “Tamise”?

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In lieu of these vehicles promising speedy safety, a screaming crowd was pushing, hustling, climbing—it was even attempting to rush the terraces.

The distracted fugitives looked about, staring in helpless dismay. At last they gave a sigh of relief. Salvation was in sight. A few brave battalions, fully armed, were now surrounding the royal party. Two small broughams drawn each by a single horse were being valiantly protected by these faithful troops. Into the first the old king thrust his wife, Marie Amélie, who was at the fainting-point. The king jumped in after her, shutting the door with surprising vigor. Into the second carriage the Duchesse d'Orléans and her three children crowded as best they could.

The royal party was off.

Before the little crowd which had assembled, curious-eyed, wondering who these affrighted, excited-looking people might be—before the crowd had had time to recognize in this elderly, careworn couple their own king and queen of exactly half an hour ago, the two carriages, now escorted by a company of mounted troops, were quickly whirling along the Cours la Reine.

The Château de Saint-Cloud was to be the first halt in this melancholy flight.

IV

The king's plan was to make a hasty rush for the Palace of Saint-Cloud. His true objective would be

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the Château d'Eu, he had pompously announced, it being one of the Orleans private and personal possessions. In this château the old king had decided that he and his dear consort might comfortably establish themselves, might settle down, and await the inevitable end which even kingship could not retard—so little had the lesson taught by revolutionary cries, seditious shouts, and a frenzied and maddened populace, ripe for any mischief, been heeded. The Bourbon barrier of imperial impenetrability to any view or unpleasant fact was still thick and high, barring the way to enlightenment, as it had been in the old age of Louis XIV.

Louis Philippe still thought imperially. The sordid, practical matters which might make living on a princely scale more or less of a daily vexatious problem seemed never to have occurred to him. In their hurried departure the king had royally forgotten four hundred thousand francs left in his desk, at the Tuileries Palace. This sum might have made residence in any château fairly comfortable for at least a few weeks—with economy—and Louis Philippe was noted for an almost Norman talent for thrift.

Neither the halt at Saint-Cloud nor the residence at Eu was to come to pass. The royal fugitives were urged to hasten on to Dreux. At this latter town, it was urged, the king and queen would find themselves also in their own domain, since a large part of Dreux and its great forests were then part of the Orleans estates.

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The journey thither was enlivened by an attempt of the king to effect a disguise. He took off his false toupet, drew over his head and forehead a black silk cap, and, on this eventful day, not having been shaved, his altered appearance seemed to satisfy even the anxious, agitated queen. She expressed her approval by the gratifying announcement:

“You look a hundred years old!”

At Dreux the party halted. At ten at night the weary fugitives entered the old town that is even in our day the Saint-Denis, the tomb of the royal Orleans family. Only six weeks before the king's beloved sister Adelaide, the political head of the family, had been laid at rest in the vast family vault.

Instead of resting, the pious queen spent her hours of respite from dreaded recognition, from taunting, cruel-faced crowds, on her knees. Her prayers for safety, for the king's quick delivery from these haunting specters of fear, were lifted to heaven beside the dead of her race.

The king, on the contrary, spent half his night in the kingly fashion of kings not yet used to their fallen state. Surprised by “an uncouth fear,” he was nervously clamoring for his money, his comforts, and his suite; yet Louis Philippe, as prince, had had an apprenticeship as a fugitive and as an exile. Eighteen years of palace luxuries, however, and the glory of at last wearing a crown, even if, in the strict sense of the word, Louis Philippe had not ruled nor had he really governed his people—this habit of wearing crowns and sitting on cushioned thrones

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seems to be a habit as difficult to break as though it were a vice.

V

On awakening the following morning, after their scant hours of rest, a fresh disaster confronted the king and queen.

The Republic had been proclaimed in Paris!

Then, since the young Comte de Paris had not been acclaimed as king under the regency of the Duchesse d'Orléans, his mother, where was the young king? What had become of the duchesse and her sons? Here was an eating anxiety added to the grave uncertainty as to whether or no, now, with a revolution in actual being, the Republic already a certainty, whether escape would be a feasible undertaking.

It was some days before the full knowledge of all that happened to the lovely young duchesse and her children was known either to France or to the duchesse's royal father- and mother-in-law.

In the building we now know as the *Chambre des Députés*, fronting the *Place de la Concorde*, the Duchesse d'Orléans had been passing through her own tragic hour. She had led thither her two sons, the Duc de Berri and the Duc de Chartres, instead of following the king and queen.

Her brother-in-law, the Duc de Nemours, faithful to the guardianship of the little children of his dead brother, was beside his courageous sister-in-law.

This impetuous flight of the duchesse with her

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children to the Corps Législatif to save the crown, in the hope that the person and presence of the heir apparent—this child of six—might appeal to the representatives of the nation, might stir patriotic emotionalism, has been dramatically described by Lamartine:¹

“The large door facing the tribune on a level with the highest seats of the hall—this door opened. A woman appeared—it is the Duchesse d’Orléans. She is dressed in mourning. Her half-uplifted veil reveals a face whose youth and beauty are enhanced by her mingled emotions and her sadness. She holds the young king, who stumbles as he mounts the steps, in her right hand, and in her left she grasps the little Duc de Chartres—children to whom this catastrophe presents itself as a spectacle. . . . Some generals in uniform, some officers of the national guard, descend in the wake of the princess. She salutes with timid grace the motionless assembly; she seats herself, between her two children, below the tribune, innocent victims before a supreme court which has come to hear this pleading of the cause of royalty. At this moment this cause is already won in the eyes and hearts of all.”

The final verdict, however, was the death-knell of the Orleans dynasty. “Too late, too late!” rang out the triumphant voice of popular government.

As soon as the doom of the crown was sounded, the duchesse, the Duc de Nemours, and the children made a hasty retreat from the Corps Législatif.

¹ Lamartine, *Revolution*, 1848.

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They effected their escape; but their whereabouts remained a mystery for some time.

VI

On learning the Republic had been declared, Louis Philippe was at last convinced that the kingship of his family was at an end. Stunned, amazed, stupefied as are the aged under any sudden blow—and of blows in twenty-four hours there had been enough to have stricken down youth and vigor—the king cried, “It is like Charles X, only worse!”

The calamities that happen to ourselves are always worse than those which befall our brother.

Once more the road of exile must be trod. Hasty consultations with the few counselors about him finally resulted in the coast of Normandy being decided upon. England loomed large as the true goal of safety.

Once more the fugitives must take seats in the royal carriage which had brought them from Versailles. The king and queen, it was decided, were now to travel under the name of M. and Mme. Lebrun.

Monsieur Maréchal, the loyal *préfet* of Dreux and a devoted Orleanist, acted in a truly royal manner. Six thousand bank-notes and six thousand in silver *sous* were given to the travelers. Not content with this proof of loyalty, the brave man mounted the box himself. He gave the order to the postilions to take the “road to Anet.”

Anet!—what souvenirs had crowded the long

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journey. The Tuileries, Versailles, Trianon, Dreux—the last the sepulcher of all the dead Orleansees; and now Anet, the beautiful château of Diane de Poitiers! Each palace and château recalled past dead and gone splendors. If imperial grandeur stars the road of great empires with palatial and architectural masterpieces, when kings are forced into exile such become oftentimes sinister sign-posts to point derisively the way to safety.

The drive from Diane's famous château and across the splendid forest of Dreux—the present property of the Orleans family, and their preferred hunting-ground—on to Evreux, was found to be both long and wearisome.

At Evreux a dramatic incident occurred. The king was recognized. But the tragedy of capture was happily averted. Clamorous cries arose as the carriages approached Evreux.

"Vive la Réforme! A bas Louis Philippe!" greeted the ears of the fugitives. It was market-day. Curious eyes peered into the great lumbering vehicle. Whispers, then a loud-tongued voice shouted: *"C'est Louis! C'est le roi!"* And a peasant, having recognized the king, ran to find a gendarme to arrest him.

The postilion dug his spurs deep into the horses' sides. Springing forward, dashing into a gallop, the heavy vehicle, with the betraying jingle of chains rattling, of wheels grinding deep into the rough roads, and the carriage was whirled, by the horses' speed, through the dazed crowd before the gendarme or peasants could stop the flight.

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Once beyond the town, the fugitives and their escorts sank back among the cushions, their breath quick on the lip, as they realized the gravity of the danger they had escaped. This incident was the first warning of the more than probable fate that awaited the king were he and the queen to fall into revolutionary hands.

Louis Philippe, having usurped the rights of the elder branch of the Bourbons to the throne in the person of the Duc de Bordeaux—grandson of Charles X—and having held the throne as a constitutional king, establishing a "citizen monarchy," and, therefore, also the royal creature himself of a virtual revolution, of a *coup d'état*, had doubtless felt himself safeguarded from revolutionary violence. He was to learn the age-long temper of a populace and people when they had once tasted of the wine of so-called liberty. He who sits in the seats of the mighty represents power, authority, tyranny. His head must be the first head to fall.

With the force of this fact finally borne in upon him, Louis Philippe, for the remainder of the fearsome journey, assembled his powers of will, fronting danger with calmer resourcefulness, since at last he had grasped the awful fact that he and his dear wife were in reality flying for their very lives.

This first serious-visaged danger behind them, the question that arose, once they were abroad upon the highroad, with the quick midwinter night closing in about them, was: where should they, where could they, seek shelter for the night?

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Again Monsieur Maréchal proved his ability to rescue royalty in distress. He bethought him of a château three miles from town belonging, happily, to Monsieur Duvilliers, who was, or who had been, most fortunately, *Intendant du Roi*. His loyalty, therefore, could be counted upon.

Turning into the lane leading to the château, all was dark. The hopes of the travelers sank to zero-point. Lights, however, were soon seen to glimmer from a farm-house within the grounds. The jaded horses dragged the heavy carriage to the farm door. Monsieur Maréchal alighted, confronting the burly form of the farmer.

On learning what was demanded of him, Bertrand, the stanch defender of the château's treasures, would hear of no intrusion of strangers within its precincts. Useless were the arguments, enforced by good weight of financial rewards, presented to him. No! No! "Non, non et non, Monsieur—my master is absent. I have orders; I am the guardian here; I must obey my instructions."

Was it the queen's drawn, pale face, her timid, imploring eyes that the flare of the lanterns lit up? Was it the look of utter exhaustion on these two worn and weary elderly faces that softened Bertrand the farmer's stern resolution?

This glimpse of Monsieur Maréchal's two "friends" more than corroborated the *préfet's* touching appeal.

"You see—this lady and gentleman—they can go no farther."

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A large-roomed *salle* in the old farm-house; a blazing fire in the deep chimney; the appetizing smell of onions; and at a long, wide table plowmen, dairy-maids, and grooms seated, in silence now, their clear eyes staring at the new-comers—such was the scene that was presented to the eyes of the king and queen on entering the great room.

In his plain, hearty, rustic fashion, now that these two rather appealingly weary travelers were under his roof—were his guests—Bertrand, as host, proved his kindly nature.

“Do you like onion soup?” he asked, smilingly, of the strange-looking, elderly gentleman, who seemed to have no use for his own hands, since the valet unbuttoned his cloak, even took off his hat, and, in performing these duties, showed his master an extraordinary degree of deference. Curiously attired as he was, the old gentleman must be a somebody, since even Monsieur Maréchal gave him the *pas*, bowing low as he seated him at the table.

Surely, the quick-witted farmer summarized, though he was acting contrary to orders, his action in admitting these strangers would not be counted against him by his master. They were “quality,” at any rate; Bertrand knew people of rank at sight as well as any one. Their manners were enough to mark them as belonging—who knows? Perhaps to the court, their voices were so low and their words so beautifully said. Now Madame was getting warmer and had eaten something, one could see plainly what a beauty she must have been. “*Elle a*

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de la race, cette-là," must have passed through the farmer's mind.

And the achingly weary lady who "may have been of a great race" was, in reality, eating little or nothing. She was too spent by the emotions experienced in the last day and night for this rude, country fare to prove tempting.

Only yesterday, at this same hour, in the magnificent, gilded Tuileries Galérie de Diane, there had been spread the superb royal feast called "*le dîner du roi.*" Above the glistening silver, the spotless linen, the priceless Sèvres china, and the decoration of costly flowers there rose those other lovely flowers, "the children's charming heads grouped above the splendid board." ¹

In twenty-four hours there had come this seemingly unbelievable, this fantastic, turn in fortune's wheel. Here were the king and queen seated side by side with these farm-hands, and with their own serving-man—glad of the protection offered by these humble folk, glad of the safety under the roof of this farm-house, glad of the fragrant onion soup!

The king, who liked onion soup, was greedily satisfying his hunger. The queen, meanwhile, had time, through her gentle, though tired, eyes and her not too keenly alert mind, to note vaguely the amazingly strange customs of those she was so certain only a Bourbon could rightly govern.

Each plowman, dairymaid, and hostler, she observed, held out his or her plate, in turn. Each

¹ Lenôtre, *Les Derniers Jours*, etc.

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received a portion of the steaming soup good enough for royalty, of a piece of cold meat, and of an omelet. Then there followed a great clinking of knives and spoons. Peasant-like, there was no conversation. The eating of supper after the hard day's toil was too serious a matter to be interrupted by idle talk.

It all seemed right enough, since such were the customs and habits of this world that really didn't count, except in so far as it furnished revenue, or when it dared to lift its insolent voice and shout: "*A mort! A mort! A bas le roi!*"

Simple and kindly as the lowly creatures now seemed, grouped about this evening meal, they were really brutes—and monsters, it appeared. Even a gentle lady, and Marie Amélie was gentle—she having been born a princess, could not be supposed, in that mid-nineteenth century, to possess sufficient elasticity of sympathy to bridge the chasm separating "the people" from their appointed—always by the will of God—from their appointed rulers.

How could a royal mind be open to understand, to see to the roots of right and wrong, to comprehend this wide-spread protest of a people against the evils of a misgoverned, of a so-called "constitutional government"? Had Louis Philippe been able to remount his throne, the lesson that might have taught him certain facts about the world he was supposed to govern would have availed naught. He was a Bourbon. It was the will of God that the French peasant should bend double over the soil, should

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plow it, sow it, harvest it, so that Bourbons might rule over them in purple and fine linen. This taking the will of God for granted has cost several kings and emperors in our own day a greater surprise than even came to the Bourbons.

VII

It was only after the ending of the simple meal that the farmer Bertrand was informed who the guests were whom he had so reluctantly admitted.

Bertrand, though inured to hardships and the trials every farmer must face, had no nerves steeled for such surprises. He nearly fainted. On recovering his equilibrium, his clear, practical brain devised a plan which all concerned deemed the best solution of the grave difficulty of passing through the now republican town of Evreux, after the *alerte* of the day before.

"I'll take my big cart, the one I take to market—and my two best horses. All Evreux knows me—and the cart." And Bertrand added, he could promise to land the king at Honfleur that very same night, without relay of horses—"a matter of twenty-four leagues"—sixty-odd miles. Bertrand made this announcement with a reassuring certainty. He had the peasant's proper pride in his brave steeds and in the driving of his king to safety. What a tale to tell, as long as he lived, to his children and his children's children, but not now—later, when it would be safe.

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There was only one stumbling-block that barred the way to an assured success of the scheme. The king—yes, and Thuret, the valet—Betrand could promise to pass both through the town. But the queen!—there lay the danger. Evreux would be curious as to the name and status of so aristocratic-looking a lady. The king, in his disguise—oh, he would be safe! He looked like any other old gentleman.

The difficult decision, therefore, must be made. The poor old hunted king and his adoring wife must part. It would be but for a few hours. There was no hesitation on the part of the queen. To protect her idolized husband—and king—to what extremities would not the self-sacrificing Marie Amélie have gone? The scaffold itself would have held no terrors for so pious, so self-obliterating a soul.

Marie Amélie, it was therefore quickly decided, would proceed alone on her journey. This resolution, surely, proved superb courage. Here was a lady to go through nearly a hundred kilometers of country, in a carriage that would draw every eye; through towns and villages already drunk with the fiery wine of supposed liberty, all of their lively, curious inhabitants already on the *qui vive* of excitement, tingling with the news of the attempted evasions of the king and queen; and every peasant and townsman hoping it would fall to his happy luck to catch a live king and queen and thus earn not only a nation's gratitude, but as well a substantial reward. *Dame!* names had gone down into history for a far less glorious act.

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Possibly divining all this, Marie Amélie went forth upon her journey as a pious and gentle-minded queen and lady should. She said her prayers and then mounted the high steps of the heavy vehicle with the dignity of a queen and the courage of a good Catholic.

The king had started long before her.

It was still night when he made his toilet. Once again he donned his big spectacles, he pulled his black cap over his forehead and his coat collar up to his nose; then he seated himself beside Thuret, his valet, and was driven out into the dark lanes.

No less a brilliant raconteur than Victor Hugo used to hold his audience captive with the dramatic manner in which he narrated this drive from Evreux to Honfleur. Hugo had had the whole story from Thuret himself.

On reaching Evreux the cart was stopped. A national guard, one created overnight, barred the way. He lifted curious, scrutinizing eyes to the man driving the cart and to his two passengers. In the cold, raw air of the February morning his voice sounded as though hoarsely croaking the knell of fate.

"Hey!—hola!—whom have you here? It is said the king is trying to escape; that he's hereabouts—"

"That's news, neighbor," dryly remarked Bertrand.

The swaying lantern now reached the farmer's calm, red face.



QUEEN MARIE-AMÉLIE
From a painting by Winterhalter

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"Tiens, c'est toi, Bertrand. I know him," cried the apparently naïve guard to those about him. Then swiftly the man drew close to the cart-wheels to whisper, still more hoarsely, "I also know your passenger. Go quickly!"

So there were still brave hearts beating under republican uniforms. Once more the king could draw his breath freely, could crawl into his coat for greater warmth, and summon further courage for the long journey.

VIII

All along that beautiful road you and I follow on our motor-trips from Paris into Normandy, through the upper plains of the Eure, through its wooded slopes, on to Thibouville-la-Rivière, where one turns from the Evreux national road to follow the vagabond river Risle—a river that would be counted but a stream in America—on and on the heavy peasant cart, with its heavy-hearted king as passenger, rolled.

It was a drive that seemed endless. It was eleven o'clock at night before Thibouville-la-Rivière could be reached.

How favorite a route was the following of the Risle Valley road for royalty in flight! Its essentially rustic character was one of the chief reasons of this choice. Along this country road one sees country sights. One passes Normandy thatched houses that are still thatched, and not roofed with bright, iron tiles; there are peasant gardens, clambering

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roses de Dijon, and hollyhocks as high as the hedges; and there are all the pleasant farm-house features of wandering cattle, meandering sheep, and flocks of geese and ducks solemnly waddling to the river, one of just the right size for a comfortable bath.

At eleven o'clock at night, however, only the security and pastoral quiet were things to be thankful for.

Port Audemer, the first large town on their route, the fugitive king could pass in comparative calm. Few were the lights in such towns in 1848, and fewer still those of its inhabitants abroad.

Just beyond the town the queen's carriage passed the slower-going peasant cart. A sigh of relief must have been the mutual greeting of this king and queen who might not even salute the other on the open road.

The faint, pale February sun broke timidly on the gloom of a dark morning when at seven o'clock a cart drawn by two weary, jaded horses pulled up in front of the small pavilion on the Upper Honfleur road, on the Côte-de-Grâce.

In one account of this odyssey of the king it is recorded that both king and queen alighted from the cart. Their joint appearance at the château gate, in whose inclosure was the unpretentious pavilion to which they sought admission, presupposes the queen having abandoned her carriage. She may have changed along the road close to Honfleur to take her place beside her husband in the cart. This version of the adventure seems probable in view of

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the danger of discovery as so sumptuous a vehicle as the carriage might have caused. An appearance in the Honfleur streets of a royal carriage covered with mud at seven in the morning could hardly be explained on the ground of this excursion into Normandy, in midwinter, being a mere pleasure trip.

Even at seven in the morning the Norman townsman's curiosity is wide awake. With certain rumors that were soon to be broad-spread, of a price on the king's head, even slower wits than keen-edged Norman brains would soon have traced the arrival of a royal carriage at a matutinal hour; of a sad-faced, aristocratic-nosed elderly lady as sole occupant of the vehicle; and her descent at an obscure pavilion, where she was joined by an aged-looking, fatigued monsieur, as being the right prey.

The peasant's cart was the happily inspired camouflage.

IX

"The affairs of the heart cannot be paid."

This was the farmer Bertrand's noble response when he was offered payment for the courageous undertaking of landing his king safely at Honfleur. He had risked his own life and also the loss of his horses; and to a farmer the latter would weigh almost as heavily in the balance of possible danger as the more serious ending of one's own existence.

Bertrand, his future, his cart, and his horses fade into the mists of unwritten history. But his page

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in the annals of this adventure of a king's flight is a bright one.

The days that followed were, like the nights, full of tortured anxiety for the king and queen. Nature appeared to have taken a hand in piling up obstacles and in increasing the difficulties of the attempt to reach the English coast.

Tempests, raging seas, icy temperatures—such was the awesome weather that greeted the fugitives. The Seine was running its mad, midwinter course of fury; one might have thought the sea beyond Havre had human passions and unstrung nerves. There were passionate outbursts that flung their anger like blows across the broad mouth of the Seine. There could be no thought of crossing, even to Havre, in the teeth of such a gale.

Rumors as sinister as the dread weather filled the Honfleur streets, crept up the Côte-de-Grâce, penetrated stealthily through the tightly closed doors and narrow casements of the tiny pavilion.

A severe order of the republican government had reached Normandy. The king and queen, it was known, had fled toward the coast. Their escape must be prevented. Any one harboring them must pay forfeit with his life. A price was set upon the king's head.

This order was listened to in outward calm and with inward tremors by the fugitives. Immediate flight across the Channel became the more imperative.

One look across to Havre, from the heights of the

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château grounds, was enough to convince the most courageous among the party that the crossing from Honfleur was an impossibility. No boat could run in the teeth of such weather.

Trouville! Why not try Trouville? This sea-coast town was directly opposite Havre; the tidal changes that made the crossing *via* Honfleur uncertain and dangerous would not affect the more open sea-spaces fronting the Trouville beaches.

It was decided to despatch Racine on a tour of investigation. He returned with great news. He had found a man, a sailor, who seemed sent by Providence. He was named Hallot; he had sailed on the *Belle Poule*, having served under the Prince de Joinville, the king's own son. Hallot had been among the "braves" who had brought Napoleon's remains from St. Helena to Paris.

Hallot would lay down his life for his king.

What was more to the point, he had arranged a seemingly perfect plan for facilitating the king's crossing over to England. He had found a sailor who would take Louis Philippe across to Havre.

There was no time to be lost. Racine harnessed his one horse to a tiny cart, and off the king started for what he hoped was the end of his great adventure.

In such a vehicle, confronting such winds and tempests, it took hours to reach Trouville. There was a dramatic meeting of the king with Hallot and the sailor who had sworn to convey his royal passengers safely across the water.

But the sea was raging; the waves were now

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mountainous; no fisherman's boat could live in such angry waters. The project must be abandoned. The sailor, indeed, flatly refused to go.

In view of this fresh setback, it was hastily decided, as on the morrow the sea might be calmer, that the king must remain overnight at Trouville. Broken now to meet any fate that might be meted out to him, Louis Philippe reluctantly acquiesced. He passed a night of terror that outfaced all possible discomfort, in a fisherman's miserable hut. It was already a whispered fact in Trouville that he had come to the town hoping to effect his escape to England. Orders had been given to search all the houses. The king, therefore, must be kept in strictest hiding; he must not even show himself at a window.

Suddenly, in the middle of the night, a fisherman rushed in. They had been betrayed! In a moment the gendarmes would appear and the king would be taken.

The king was pushed unceremoniously toward a back door of the hut. An unknown man was standing in the door. The king drew back in affright. But the stranger announced in a whisper his fidelity. He begged his king to follow. He led Louis Philippe through Trouville's most tortuous streets.

Stumbling, drenched with rain, forced to walk on and on, with the stinging hail beating against eyes and face, the two finally reached Touques, about two kilometers out of Trouville. There a *char-à-bancs* was found awaiting the now exhausted fugi-

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tive. It was the loyal mayor of Trouville himself whom the king must thank for thus leading him once more out of the jaws of a horrible fate.

General de Rumigny and M. de Perthuis, the owner of the Côte-de-Grâce château and pavilion, were now the king's companions to Honfleur. The road leading thither—the one from Touques—would offer greater security, it was decided, than the coast road, since it is inland, and, at night would be deserted. Through the darkness, the only fellow-travelers were the stinging wind and the pitiless rain. The night's adventure was not to end without one more test of the old king's powers of endurance. It was necessary, as a measure of greater safety, for the three travelers to mount the steep Côte-de-Grâce on foot.

On the arrival of the party, the king found his wife so overcome with delight at his return that she cried for joy. She gave a hurried account of her own four days' dreary experiences: she had seen no one; she had not dared even to open a window. She had tried to sew to calm her nerves. It was in prayer rather than in her needle that the queen had found relief from her heart-sickening anxiety.

What was left of the night was spent in much-needed rest.

The next morning fresh consultations were held. With the advent of M. de Perthuis, the owner of the château and pavilion, more vigorous measures were soon adopted and effected.

It was learned that the *Courrier*—the Honfleur

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boat ferrying across to Havre—was to leave that very evening. The departure of the king and queen must not be delayed. Every moment might bring about tragic results. The order to watch for the royal fugitives was now general; domiciliary visits would be made. The embarkation, therefore, must be most carefully planned.

It was decided that the party should be divided. The king, under the name of Sir William Smith, would board the vessel alone. The queen, and after her M. de Perthuis, and Thuret, the valet, would each cross the gang-plank leading to the boat separately. The gloomy February twilight was friendly to the enterprise. Few were the lights in streets, docks, quays, or on boats in 1848. At last all were on board and the boat pushed off. As strangers to one another the party of four attracted no dangerous surveillance.

Some traveling musicians were enlivening the trip across the still stormy waters. Their choice of a song was one hardly calculated to raise the spirits or solace the depressed minds of at least two on board who had experienced, for over a long week of suffering and fatigue, vicissitudes that might well have worn to shreds of nervous exhaustion even the very young.

*“O Richard, O mon hoi
L’univers t’abandonné!”*

was the song that rang, in cracked high voices above the roaring seas.

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At Havre both voices and waters were stilled. In the darkness it was easy to lead the strangers to the English ship, one that lay alongside. English loyalty, English sympathy for fallen grandeur, English hospitality, met the uneasy fugitives at the very gang-plank of *L'Express*. The success of the final escape to safety was wholly due to Mr. Jones, English vice-consul at Havre.

As the ex-king and queen pass out into the misty night, and across the Channel to the white cliffs of England, even as the boat that conveys the royal pair merges into the thickness of the night, the Bourbon rule over France fades into a vanished dream.

NOTE.—Since this chapter was written, an article has appeared in *La Revue de Paris* (December 1, 1919) in which the former mayor of Trouville gives a graphic account of the tragic days passed at Trouville, when the king was awaiting his transportation to England. This recital differs in some slight particulars with the former historic rendering. The king was more comfortably lodged, more devoted friends and adherents surrounded him, than in the other popular version of his stay in Trouville.

The danger of discovery was, it appears, even greater than has been commonly stated, and the king's courage and calm during the long, anxious days and nights were the marvel of those who helped to rescue him from a fate worse than death.

CHAPTER IX

UP THE SEINE

I

THE actual starting forth from the Havre docks for our long day's trip up the Seine had no such dramatic complications as attended the departure of an exiled king and queen. There are unmeasured advantages in being a simple citizen. Those who have had the luck to be born such, and yet dream of crowns, have already sold to heady ambition a portion of their birthright.

Like Louis Philippe, our interest and his had, at least, this in common: would the tidal boat crossing from Honfleur to Havre be in time?

On this particular morning the boat, its captain, or the tides seemed suddenly endowed with a conscience; instead of just missing the Havre steamer to Rouen, we should catch it.

The face of Havre appeared changed to us as we neared its docks. It was rather we who looked at the city with new eyes. We now knew its history. Sympathy came with understanding, and out of sympathy liking had been born. "*Comprendre—c'est aimer,*" says a French writer.

There was not a single, crazy, toppling, gray-faced house lining the Havre quays; nor was there

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a single, slatternly shape leaning forth from a sagging window-frame, but each and all were endowed with a certain poignant interest. We were in the secret of their past.

Early as was our start, Havre was in a gay mood. The inner harbor was tremendously alive. Boats were whistling, were tooting signals; decks were being scrubbed with a vigor born of the warm sun-rays; cries from fishing-boats to quays were answered by still louder cries; great ships were being towed out to sea with that air of state, as though this acceptance of aid from a fussy torpedo were the condescending grace of power to inferior craft who might be victims of a tragic end, were the ships to put forth their full speed.

We had not been steaming a quarter of an hour, and once again the beauty and charm of the waterway held us captive. Again the superb breadth of the Seine's great mouth; the brilliancy of its sparkling surface; the moving boats, ships, and sailing craft held the eyes, enchaining sight and sense.

We needed no fisherman's hoarse cry across the river, nor even the white company of the sea-gulls, to set for us the seal of contrast. The Normandy shores were now to be looked at from a river—as shores—a point of view as changed as when a man views his wife in perspective, as it were, no longer his, but another's.

There was now the loud tooting of shrill whistles; there was the sharp snort of the boat's last blast of warning; and the onlookers along the gray quays were

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turning their backs on a show that was nearly over, for at Havre every departing boat, to a Havrais, promises the possible sport of a surprise, an incident, or the more exciting sensation of an accident.

The boat at Rouen lay not far from the quay on which the Honfleur boat had landed us.

Once aboard, the spirit of adventure seemed to spread its wings. We had the heady feeling of going off on a quest of new sights and scenes, new impressions and sensations. Going up to Rouen by boat on a voyage of the discovery of the Seine assumed the importance of a serious event. No one knew what might happen nor what unlooked-for novelties we might chance upon.

We were not alone in considering the starting forth on this voyage a matter of consequence. Our fellow-passengers had the serious air of those who were setting forth on a lengthy journey. There were those who showed signs of having slept ill; others were unnaturally gay; luncheon-baskets were brought on board with the care one might bestow on a nursing infant; and the choice of seat and place on deck was gravely discussed by voices raised in heated dispute.

The scenes of parting, on the quays, were characteristic of French love and delight in making the most of an exciting moment. There were tender embraces, resounding kisses were interchanged, loud clappings were given to shoulders or back, and there were admonitions all could hear, "not to sit in a draught," "to be sure to protect one's ears, the winds

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are so high along the river!" and "to send post-cards!"

One could be quite positive certain changes in wills must have been made overnight. For no Frenchman goes forth on a day's journey without making sure his house is in order. To undertake any journey is always a matter of grave consideration in France.

The boat was slipping out from the harbor. We were off.

As we rounded the harbor pier-heads, once more the splendor of the great outlook, over the Channel, the Seine's great mouth, the shrouded city and the tender greens of the opposite coast surprised and delighted the eye. Once more we were a part of the water-world, off on a voyage of adventure.

Harfleur's spire, a few miles along the shore, to the left, was our first discovery.

Seen from the boat's deck, the town showed clusters of houses above whose roofs, lancelike, Saint-Martin's famous Gothic spire showed its gray lace-work against the morning's blues.

Harfleur and Honfleur have stared at each other across the Seine, like two jealous women, for long centuries. Harfleur also has had its story of romance, its moment of glow and power, and its tragedy of semi-extinction. Second only in importance to Honfleur, its rival, as the second port of northern France, until Havre rose to extinguish both, Harfleur had riches enough to tempt both Norman pirates and English conquerors.

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William II of Germany must have remembered Henri V's methods of carrying off valuable human booty to enrich his own land.

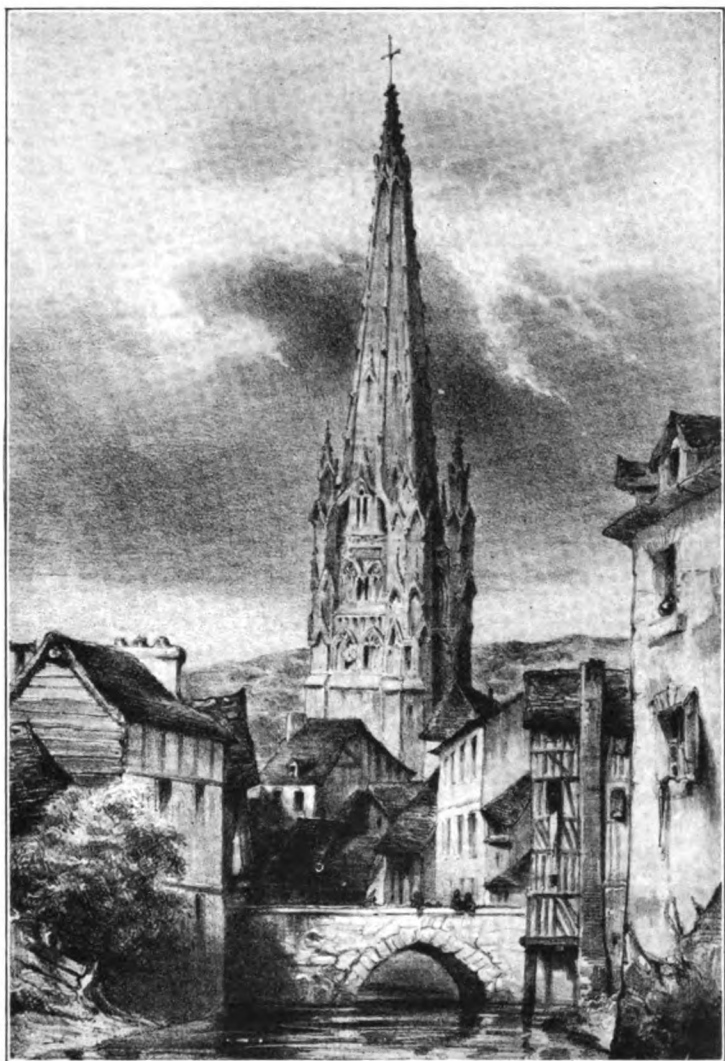
In the siege by which the English king captured Harfleur, after forty days of heroic resistance, sea-power played its great, effective game. While Harfleur could draw provisions from the interior, Henry had behind him all England as a storehouse.

The conditions imposed on Harfleur, after her capitulation, were as hard and as cruel as have been those the world has been crying out against in our recent war. The conqueror wanted those stout-hearted Harfleurais to blood his own England. Above all, he proposed there should be no further breeding of heroes in the Norman town. Sixteen hundred of the best families of Harfleur were carried off to England, with only "a portion of their clothing and five sols."

Harfleur in its now tranquil aspect appears to have forgotten its tragic epoch. France itself, like all excitable, imaginative nations, easily forgets. The very climate bids one to believe in the best. Once a danger past, and a Frenchman is prone to fall into the optimistic error that, since lightning never strikes twice in the same place, the next bolt from the blue will pass him by.

II

The Seine had suddenly narrowed. We were now clearly in the true river. The uprising chalk cliffs,



THE BELL TOWER OF HARFLEUR IN NORMANDY

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showing their white face, on our left, were in sharp contrast to the great stretches of green fields, peopled with cattle, and the long lines of tree-domed elms on the other.

Close to the water's edge there ran a long terrace. Above the terrace there is still pointed out by the guides and historians a château whose story has two women for its heroines. This château is built over or near the site of the former abbaye of Grestain. In this abbaye one woman was buried whose history had a certain analogy to that of her sister in sin—yet what a moral chasm separates the two!

Arlette, proud mistress of Robert the Devil, proud mother of William the Conqueror, who went to her undoing with the port and bearing of a queen, though but a tanner's daughter, was buried in the abbaye.

Lovely La Vallière spent a briefer time at the château. Her incomparably beautiful blue eyes have looked across these waters as do we; her delicate delight in lovely things must have joyed in this summer sea, in this brilliantly colored river, in the stately hills, and in these dazzlingly white cliffs. La Vallière who was "ashamed of being Louis XIV's mistress, ashamed of being a mother, ashamed of being a duchess"—what a development of sensibility in six centuries! It is true it took six centuries to develop this delicacy of feeling.

A few miles beyond the abbaye, above a steep cliff, a collection of noble ruins and stately buildings arrests the eye. A Norman keep, separate, ivy-

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garlanded, guards the cliffs to the east; a long château, of later date, with wide-open windows to prove life is still being lived in this grand old sanctuary of heroic deeds, and now to the west another tower of defense is descried. These majestic buildings must have their story to tell.

This Château of Tankerville, indeed, is as old as France, older than this land which, when the first defenses above on the cliff were built, was Normandy and not yet France. You must go to technical books on the history of military fortresses to learn all the wonders of this outpost of defense called Tankerville. They will tell you that "the ensemble of the *courtines* and the towers composing the fortress followed the triangular plan of the cliff's plateau—a plan which suggests the conclusion the fortress was erected at a single stroke."

It is certain there are portions of the building which may be traced to the eleventh, others to the thirteenth, while still others were built as late as the sixteenth century.

The story of those who have lived, dreamed, loved, gone forth to die, or returned to enjoy the rewards of noble deeds and splendid adventures—this story of a great family should fill, not a page, but a volume. "Whoever formerly mentioned a Comte de Tankerville named also a Constable of Normandy. In every army of the Middle Ages, as well as in the councils of the kings, you would find a Tankerville. They were at Palestine as they were at Poitiers and Azincourt."

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"In these walls that seem to defy the centuries, between these two ruined towers, on this magnificent terrace that appears to lose itself in the sky; on the edge of these menacing cliffs, under these old oaks which have resisted to all the tempests of earth and heaven, there have passed, there have been drawn by all the magic power of glory, of ambition, of love, the Comtes of Melun, of Tankerville, of Montgomery, the Dunois, the Longuevilles, the d'Harcourts, and the Montmorencys." Jules Janin's burst of eloquence ends in a triumphal blast, "Assuredly the shores of the Rhine do not carry nobler stones nor more illustrious ruins."

It is indeed impossible to look up at those cliffs, thus nobly crowned, and not feel the thrill communicated by so brave a record. What modern work of fiction could equal the human documents to be torn from the annals of these nine centuries of heroic achievement?

Even as our boat sweeps us on, all too swiftly, so does history, it appears to me, slur the very pages we should con with far more passionate interest than a mere recital of dates and battles. To learn, for example, what were the lives of those countesses left at home when their lords went off crusading; what their occupations, their real loves, their chosen amusements—how would such a veracious account light up for us the dimmed mists of medieval existences! To follow the political, social, and military changes which those keeps have outlined from the Crusades to the Revolution, one would have to

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plunge deep into the whole history of France. Even then, after serious study, the real story of the owners of Tankerville could be but guessed at; their true lives, like those who peopled the dark chambers of the *oubliettes*, still shown, are an unwritten page, a forgotten mystery.

Such a superb mass of feudal and Renaissance structures tempts one to evoke, at least, a single scene of the dimly lighted medieval life, to dress it, and to decorate it.

One need not be endowed with the imagination of a poet or of a scene-maker to image the drift toward the terrace of a young and lovely Comtesse de Tankerville. She would send her gaze up and down the long reaches of the Seine; she might hope for a sail to promise news of a husband pursuing the one business, save the chase, a noble of that day could engage in—her comte would be at war or crusading. In the latter case, having started, as he supposed, to regain the Holy Sepulcher, in reality he had gone forth on the journey of adventure that made the Crusades the great fashion of those far-away centuries.

Then, as now, the Lady of Tankerville would see the same magic beauty before her as we are looking out upon; she would see this river of light, taking a hundred shades at noon, at dawn, at twilight; there would be the same poplars, slightly shivering in the summer wind; there would be the ruddy earth, across the cliff to her right, a flame lighting up the still landscape; and there would be the forests, dark,

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green, interminable, riding up to the skies. The lady, quivering like the poplars, might shiver in her turn, and, seeing no sail, she would turn to seek her rose-garden, hidden jealously behind the frowning Norman keep. Her ladies would be there, to tempt her to forget; one would hand her her tapestry-frame; another would suggest a reading aloud from *Le Roman du Rou*; but, if the right page were in the circle, it would be his voice that would sing the love-song a passing troubadour had warbled but a few nights before in the great château hall. The page would never consider any of the charms of his adored mistress's beauty in the least diminished because, though gowned, girdled, and bejeweled like a queen, she was what we should call not clean. When forks were as yet not invented, and daintiest ladies ate with their fingers; when handkerchiefs were not in use, since there were none—how were a lovely lady's hands to be kept clean?

Some two centuries later, as we know, that *charmeuse* Marguerite de Navarre could cry, never dreaming she would chiefly be mentioned in history by this illuminating cry, "Look at these lovely hands of mine; they have not been washed for eight days, yet I will wage they outshine yours."

French courts and even high-hung rose-gardens must wait for Diane de Poitiers to take to the cold-water English tub, and for pretty Anne of Austria to be spoken of as *propre et fort nette*.

The persistence of certain of the great French families and of their continuing activities is proved

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by a critique written by the Vicomte de Vogüé before his lamented death.

He wrote of a certain book that "charmed me." He goes so far as to quarrel with all those who have not read it. "I flaunt my discovery. I am amazed, I am indignant." And Vogüé's "indignation" is not softened when one eminent Frenchman confesses "the title froze me."

The title, *Quelques Regards sur les Lois Sociales*, would, I am bound to admit, be as a cold douche to most lovers of new books. It would rather suggest a possible soporific than the delight our clever critic found in it. Had the Duc d'Harcourt's book been baptized, as Vogüé suggests, *Un Regard à Notre Temps*, each one of us would have longed for a peep at this "Look at Our Own Time." The d'Harcourts, among so many of the great French families whose history is a part of the story of Tankerville, are among those whose own history is indeed of "our own time." As Tankerville's sons had been at Agincourt, so was Tankerville itself in the great war. The château had ceased to present, since long centuries, any serious military advantage to its possessors.

Modern progress, however, had baptized one of its successful achievements with the name of the feudal castle.

In order to relieve the congestion of transports and cargoes constantly accumulating on the Havre docks and quays, the French government some years ago, at the cost of twenty-one millions of francs, built a

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canal running from Havre to the foot of the hill known as Tankerville—the cliff on whose heights are the ruins and château.

During the recent war this canal proved to be of inestimable service. Canal-boats could carry cargoes to the waiting boats and transports at the entrance of the canal into the Seine, or the canal-boats could themselves be towed by steam-tugs the whole length of the river as far as Paris itself.

Such a center of utility and aid to French military necessities in furnishing better facilities for hurrying forward supplies, coal, and clothing to the French armies, as well as stocking Paris itself with food and coal, was a fitting target for German destructive energies. This canal entrance into the Seine was bombed again and again by audacious German aviators. The damage done seems to have been infinitesimal. The canal-boats continued to pass along the smooth, even waters, laden with their precious cargoes, to discharge them or to proceed onward to Rouen or Havre with no more concern than though the “birds” were birds indeed, with no death-dealing horrors in their clutches.

One of the most daring of these German flights was that of an enemy aviator who conceived a very original manner of attack on Havre.

Havre, because of its ocean currents, its high winds, and also because of the careful, sustained watchfulness of its winged air fleet, from the very beginning of the war had been found by the Germans to be almost impossible of successful attack from the

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skies. Havre's lights along the shores, its camps on the heights of its hills, above the city, and those above Harfleur had burned with continuous brilliancy for four long years, as though in signal defiance to German prowess.

One German aviator, however, succeeded in landing his bomb.

Swooping down on the one Paris night express-train after it left the Rouen station, the clever aviator foiled any night-watchers of the skies by flying as low as was consistent with safety. He flew just over the express-train. The noise of the latter deadened the whir of the aviator's motor. He kept his machine unvaryingly just above the engine of the train.

On reaching the Havre station, as the passengers alighted, the deadly bombs were dropped. A terrible explosion followed, with the passengers just alighting from the train as the chief victims of this audacious, cruel venture.

We were passing a vast green carpet. This wide stretch of lush grass is known as Le Marais Vernier. The diking of the Seine has rescued this valuable pasture-land, to which thousands of cattle are sent yearly to be fattened. These fine, moving groups spot the landscape with their red-and-white, black-and-white notes of color. The diking of the Seine lines we have been following, for some miles past,

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has added fat pastures to the Seine shores and millions of wealth to France.

There is at least once a year a treacherous trick of the Seine tides that has also lost thousands to the country.

No contrast could be greater than the spectacle presented by the fury of Le Mascaret, the dreaded tidal-wave that sweeps up from the sea each year in early autumn, and this exquisite pastoral picture.

Here at Quillebeuf and its near neighbor, Villequier, on the opposite bank, the Seine shores seemed to reach their very apogee of vernal loveliness. The river wound in and around low hills, or meandered lazily past low shores that carried the eye far inland to bosky groves, to tree-trimmed fields and to elms and willows that came to the water's edges as though seeking to mirror their graceful shapes.

One might cry with Lamartine:

*Montez donc, flottez donc, roulez, volez, vent, flamme,
Oiseaux, vagues, rayons, vapeurs, parfums et voix!
Terre, exhale ton souffle! Homme, élève ton âme!
Montez, flottes, roulez, accomplissez vos lois!*

For out of the vast silence, the delicate stillness of this perfect marriage of tones, colors, shapes of shapely hills, and grace of winding river, the earth did indeed seem to exhale its living breath, accomplishing its laws in forms of beauty.

Yet it is in this, the very bosom of this tender landscape, Nature, in the mystery of her inexorable laws, has chosen as the site of one of her merciless furies.

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Up from the sea there sweeps each autumn the mounting of huge waves. On and on, as Le Mascaret rushes past the reaches of the Seine, it seems to gather in strength and in might of volume. Grasses along the river-bend shiver, are bent, are uprooted, are swept along by the remorseless flood as though they were paper. Tree-trunks are torn away and canoes or rowing-boats are churned to powder. Woe betide the sail-boat caught in the angry, tempestuous flood! No man may live in a small boat on that roaring, rushing fury of waters.

Along the Quillebeuf and Villequier quays this curious tidal-wave reaches its height of violence. The stout walls built below the Quillebeuf quays are to protect the town from the lashing, mountainous waves.

Innumerable have been the shipwrecks and the maritime losses occasioned by this destructive flood.

One tragedy is still remembered with pitying horror.

On the low shores of the little town of Villequier—one we were to visit on the morrow—you will see a certain cozy, homelike front of a villa, now famous. In the green arbor to the right, overhanging the river, the man France believes to have been her greatest poet—Victor Hugo—has sat, looking out upon a scene peculiarly attuned to his genius. For the very river and landscape must have seemed to that “king of poets” to have been fashioned to meet and satisfy the needs of his giant intellect. There is wildness and yet a grave grace in the outlook;

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there is also a singular, rare sense of isolation, of achieved separateness from intrusion from too curious worlds.

In that villa happy summers were spent by the poet, who gathered there his family about him in the days when Hugo's fame rested on so sure a foundation, his restless, tempestuous genius could give itself over to the calmer joys of meditation and the untroubled delights of versification.

Out from the green arbor, one late, gray September day, there went forth for an afternoon on the river, into the boat moored to the landing, the poet's daughter, Mme. Vacquerie (Mlle. Léopoldine Hugo), her husband, her ten-year-old child, and their oarsman.

The river makes a sharp bend below the river-bottom, to the right. One cannot see the river beyond the bend.

With the suddenness of a cataclysmic fate the pleasure-seekers saw, with horror at first paralyzing effort, the inrush, the mountainous sweep around the river-bend of the dreaded Mascaret. There was no warning given. The tidal-wave came with the fury and unexpectedness of an elemental force.

Row, oarsman! Pray, dear woman! Clutch your child to your bosom whence it came! For neither superhuman efforts to surmount that tossing, up-rising wall of sea, high indeed as a wall, higher than the hills, nor prayers to an unheeding Heaven, can avail. The waters coming from the sea have the sea's jealous love of booty, and as they met the frail

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bark and found therein their prey, with a single engulfing embrace, husband and wife and child and oarsman were swept to the gray, mighty arms of the risen tide.

Under the weeping willows, the recovered bodies of these victims of La Barre sleep their eternal sleep in the Villequier cemetery.

This La Barre or Le Mascaret being one of the costless spectacles of nature, if viewed from a safe vantage-point, Parisians, ever in search of a novelty to whip to sensational excitation their fatigued sensibilities, will come from afar to watch, through a monocle or an opera-glass. Delighted cries, exclamations, rise up from the shores as the angry waters send their hissing spray skyward. To have experienced an agreeable shudder was worth the journey from Paris—in pre-war days.

III

At each sweep of the river—and the Seine has as many turnings as a capricious woman—at each one of these twists of the waterway a village, a spire, a château now quickened curiosity.

A Norman church tower fronting a great sweep of plain is the church's sentinel guarding Quillebeuf. The tower has the sturdy lines of its Norman ancestry. It stands forth, overlooking a thousand cattle below it, grazing in the lush grass as though its duty were to bless cattle rather than to baptize pilots.

This ceremony of baptizing pilots with the Quille-

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beuf waters has been a tradition, a rite, an unwritten law among Normandy mothers for long centuries. That gallant, impulsive King Henri IV, whose nature and temperament fitted him, above almost all other French monarchs, to govern Frenchmen—had a way of putting his seal on towns and villages. It is the way of imaginative men, who see farther ahead than their neighbors.

Henri IV, having seen possibilities in Quillebeuf no one else had divined, enlarged the town, surrounded it with fortifications, and even wished to christen it Henricopolis. The town has shrunk since that fine effort to render it important. The fortifications are gone, but a law which the inventive king promulgated exists to this day.

Henri IV decreed that only pilots born in Quillebeuf could be given a license for pilotage on the Seine. Ambitious mothers-to-be of pilots, therefore, for centuries have been leaving farms and villages and have come to the *bon port* of Quillebeuf to be confined. The child must be baptized with the water of the Puits du Gard. This license was accorded as a privilege to the town.

The eleventh-century Romanesque ornamentation of the tower has thus looked down on a long procession of infant pilots. Thus do age-old traditions, laws, and customs bind modern France to her past. And fluent writers and easy-thinking philosophers have been prophesying, during these past four and a half eventful years, how radically France and Frenchmen were to be changed, were to be newly born, were

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to become endowed with a fresh pair of spiritual, moral, and mental wings that were to send them flying to an unknown zenith of hitherto unattained heights!

A race that has two thousand years behind it is not radically changed by a four and a half years' war—any more than its enemy across the Rhine has been reborn to a better nature or to a loftier morality, since Cæsar and Strabo found them as cruel, as vindictive, and as savage as they have proved themselves to be; they also have carefully preserved their ancient essential characteristics.

CHAPTER X

A CROSSING AT QUILLEBEUF

I CONFESS to having approached the quays at Quillebeuf with a certain sensible rising of the pulse. I was about to turn traitor. Savoring of treachery it seemed indeed thus to abandon the voyage up the Seine, in the slow but agreeably sluggish little steamer, and to take to the road.

Our treachery was, however, to wear the mitigating aspect of a minor crime. If we left the boat at Quillebeuf it was with the assured hope of retaking it at Caudebec.

To those hurried travelers who fear to lose step with the modern movement unless they enter a country or a town at a hundred-horse-power speed I will impart a very open secret. To view some of the richest jewels starred along the Seine shores, Quillebeuf and her opposite shore provide a means of crossing the river. It is at this point the motorist coming from the Calvados (Normandy) country—from Trouville or Deauville—finds his first ferry. There is a second ferry at Duclair. For the delectable enjoyment of visiting the peculiarly interesting features centered about Lillebonne and Caudebec this river passage at Quillebeuf is preferably the chosen one.

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To do even cursory justice to Lillebonne, Caudebec, Saint-Wandrille, and Jumièges—one must indeed take to the road. The approach by car to each one of these charming and inexhaustibly rich sites reveals a hundred wonderful surprises and imparts innumerable sensations. There are road beauties to be remembered a whole lifetime; there are descents on architectural and historic treasures that take on the aspect of fairylike apparitions—so unexpectedly do they emerge from tree-groves or along golden-hued fields.

As I sat on the Quillebeuf wharf, it occurred to me, among the above reflections, there were two grim-visaged possibilities which might spoil our plan of a descent upon Lillebonne in time for catching the boat at Caudebec. Were the car not to meet us; were the *bac*—the ferry-boat, plying between Quillebeuf and the opposite shore not to be true to its advertised hour, our fate would be sealed; there would be two full days that must be squandered in exploring La Seine Inférieure in lieu of reaching Rouen that very night. The Seine boat starts from Havre only on alternate days.

Who ever succeeded in life who was daunted by the fear of encountering chances? The true conqueror in the battle for prizes is surely he who counts chances as sign-posts pointing the way onward to the right goal.

Delivered of this questionably profound observation, I proceeded to make the acquaintance of a philosopher who was more worthy than I to wear the

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mantle of any one of the minor Greek sages. This calm observer of life's annoyances, and also this contented recipient of its balanced pleasures, as I was to find, was seated beside me on the wooden benches of the Quillebeuf quays.

I had just been reading an enthusiastic account of Quillebeuf's former attractions. As wise a man as Jules Janin was asserting that this dull, silent, dead-and-alive little town was "a town quite apart among Norman towns; it had its own customs, its manners, its dances, its poetry, its accent." I looked along the long rows of the tidy but expressionless houses. What and where were the characteristic signs to prove it "a town apart"? Shut blinds, tightly closed doors, and silent streets: such an aspect might prove death, possibly coming decay, but life—of semblance of life there was but this human wreck beside me.

Bowed with age, the old man's cheeks showed an interesting combination of sea-weather tan and the deep reds burned in by the Normandy sun and tinted by Calvados applejack. His speech, it is true, proved a certain unique linguistic peculiarity. Having lost his whole frontal dental apparatus, his words came with a whistling accompaniment due to two teeth that "bit opposite."

The old man's spirit, however, was superior to these evidences of the cruelties of age. His soul seemed as serene as was the serenely flowing Seine. He had confessed, with modest pride, to having been one of the infant pilots held over the Puits du Gard.

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“C’était le bon temps, Madame, those were the good old times, when customs were observed. Who respects them now? Ah well! the world progresses. France has shown us that. Who could have thought we could beat the Germans? Ha! ha! we beat them—and I’ve seen them, prisoners, going down-stream.”

The laugh was a cackle. But it had in it, like old bells jangling out of tune, the note of triumph.

On my querying whether Quillebeuf was as dead as it looked, couched, it is true, in polite phrase, the contented sage replied:

“Mais oui, Madame, Quillebeuf is dead indeed, if you wish—in winter—yes. We are so far from the great world. But in summer—” The thin old arm slipped out through the ragged, cuffless shirt-sleeve, to point triumphantly to the vehicles below us, alined along the paved bank leading to the ferry landing. Two cars, a *char-à-bancs* laden with grunting pigs and a hay-cart, were the objects to prove the alluring features of the summer season.

“See—are we not gay, in summer?” the contented philosopher continued. “All the world comes here to cross over. One is never alone, once June is come.”

The smile that illumined the wrinkled face was beautiful; even the absence of all teeth save two, and the pink cavern the widely parted lips disclosed, could not destroy the beauty of the soul that irradiated the face of this kindly creature. Here was one who, as life was slipping away, could yet glean happi-

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ness from simple pleasures. He was content to look on at life's show.

I had learned my lesson. It was one, it is true, all the easier of acceptance and of possible assimilation, since both the car and the *bac* were on time.

"Far from the great world!"

The phrase stuck. On the brief crossing, across the sunlit river, the words took on an ever-growing importance, a deeper significance. This voyage—an inland voyage, as the immortal Stevenson baptized this floating between inland shores and meadows—these still, seemingly lifeless towns, this sluggish provincial French life—how remote were all these from the great centers of France's activities! As in Honfleur, as at Harfleur, at Tankerville, and over yonder in vanishing Quillebeuf, one had the feeling of having left modern France; of having stepped back into that older, more picturesque, historic France of the Bourbons and of Napoleon. Yet, as every streamlet and modest river running into the Seine swells it to the grandeur of the wide, nobly flowing stream, so does each one of these obscure, forgotten little towns and villages prove they pour their contributory energies and the fruits of their laborious industry to feed the mighty forces we know as France.

France herself, and with firmer conviction than ever since the recent war, will boldly affirm the power of these forces. She is now, since victory has come to her, serenely conscious of leading the world. All the world recognizes the genius there is and has been

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in France for the doing of great things. But France at times forgets, with superb disdain, the fact there are other geniuses demonstrating their renovating activities elsewhere.

I remember some years ago asking one of the cleverest among clever Frenchmen why France showed so little intelligent curiosity in either the intellectual or in the artistic achievements of other nations. "There is the best of reasons for this indifference. Nothing of importance has been contributed either to art or to literature, since the Renaissance, save what France and Frenchmen have given to the world!" was the self-satisfied answer.

Pray Heaven her light may continue to shine! One star, even of the first magnitude, does not, however, make the stellar universe. To some of these lower, more earthly luminaries France appears to be slowly lifting her glances; with her genius of classification, each star, in time, will be discovered as influences either to be conciliated or feared—as rivals.

CHAPTER XI

LILLEBONNE

I

ONCE across the river, we were soon seated in the waiting car.

In an astonishingly short whirl of the wheels we were dipping in among low hills to the valley in which Lillebonne rests. The entrance to the town was disappointingly commonplace. Its dull-faced houses and the commercial-traveler-looking hotel must surely, we thought, have been built yesterday.

The townsfolk appeared to be as uninteresting as was the town itself, to have fashioned themselves, it seems, on its dulled, sleepy air.

In seeking our goal, one street only, *La rue Césarine*, lured us to follow its windings; its name at least savored of that older world whose interesting survivals we had come to investigate. Though the street's name had the right classic ring, the thoroughfare did not lead us to the right spot.

At last our car brought us close to a deep hollow. Within the curves an unmistakable amphitheater and its grassy gradients proclaimed that here was

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the old Roman Theater—the magnet that had drawn us.

An iron railing separates the too curious investigator from the grass-grown inclosure. There are, however, certain simple ways of obtaining entrance into almost any forbidden paradise. The cool, grassy seats wooed us. We, in turn, wooed a genial, yielding guardian. Soon we were the other side of the locked gate and were comfortably ensconced on the odorous grasses, where, centuries ago, Julio-bona's gay Roman world brought its slaves and the slaves brought cushions.

In our time, and from our more modest seats, there was a good deal of rebuilding to be done. We must first of all try to enlarge the theater to its former dimensions. The guide-books and works on archeology will give you the exact measurements of the amphitheater, the *Céna*, the *grand cordon circulaire*, as also they will describe the eight cages and the seven vomitories. It is still possible to trace the position and place of the cages and vomitories, in spite of Nature's triumphant success in growing grass, trees, and shrubs to recover her domain.

It was, I fear, the charm of evoking the decorative and the human aspects of this world that formerly crowded this now deserted Roman center of cruelty and of gaiety, rather than its more purely architectural character, that I, for one, found absorbing.

The noon sun must have shone as brilliantly and softly two thousand years ago as it did now, on those

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three thousand spectators, who shouted, applauded, and cursed, in all the different tongues of as mixed a world as peopled the theater.

This Juliobona—named after that famous and infamous Julia of the Roman days—was a reflecting mirror of Rome itself. Far north from Italy as it must have seemed to a Roman noble, its importance as a military center had its retroactive effect on the city. If all roads led to Rome, Juliobona's roads led to Rouen, to Harfleur, to Paris *via* Caudebec, to Dreux, and to Evreux.

Repeople this theater; attempt to recreate the scene on the *Céna* below, and one could image the spectacle that could cheat Roman eyes and senses into believing that their lost Rome was transplanted to this Gallic center. Gladiators, musicians, actors, and acrobats—all were here to play out their part, to earn praise, or to finish, spectacularly as often as not, in death. Lions, tigers, bulls, monkeys, panthers were brought from African wilds to continue the slaughter, when a burning of Christian martyrs had satiated the appetite for human sacrifice. Dancers would appear as God had made women when the Garden of Eden was the rendezvous of innocence.

Chairs, facsimiles of those elaborately carved seats you may still sit in, at Athens, at the Theater of Dionysius, would be filled by a luxuriously costumed crowd of aristocrats. The same play of human passions would be found fronting the mimic stage as fill the seats of any twentieth-century

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operatic performance or a race-meeting. "Women ruined their husbands and sought lovers evil enough to give them precious stuffs, sumptuous litters, beautiful slaves, well combed and groomed; above all else, pearls and precious stones as superb as those of Mithridates"—with such women as these were the now empty seats filled. Read for "litters," "automobiles," and for "slaves," "servants," which even the richest of husbands or lovers can hardly in our day obtain, and how much has our great world changed in two thousand years.

For further splendor in the scene of that older day there would be the superbly togaed Romans, the centurions in their glittering armor, the brilliantly costumed Gauls in those startlingly vivid colors in which they delighted. From their necks and arms would flash the sparkle of richly chased necklaces and armlets, proving to Greek artisans the genius of the Gallic worker in metals. There would be Libyans, Assyrians, Egyptian decorators whose skull-flattened profiles would recall those painted on the tombs of their country. There would be Greek hetæræ with their statuesque beauty, and the Greek philosopher-tutor who instructed Roman lads in knowledge of Greek arts and letters. Rome transported her world of slaves as easily as she did her statues and mosaics.

Each and every phase through which Rome itself passed, in its five hundred years of life, from its days of Cæsarean splendor to its decay, would be reflected on the *Céna* of this remote Gallo-Roman theater.

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From the gladiatorial shows of pure strength, the spectacle would change to setting forth a faint imitation of a Neronian massacring of Christian martyrs.

A single statue now in the Rouen Museum remains of all the world of statues which once adorned the upper columns that curved about the topmost gallery of the theater. This beautiful statue was found in the ruins of the Baths not far from the theater. Some vestiges of paintings were there also excavated. Coins, bits of armor, and jewelry were the reward of the researches made in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

All that was left for eyes to see of the splendor of this Old World was the goldening glow of noon sun-rays lighting each blade of grass to be a torch of brightness. Warmth and color and perfume, sun and grasses, would still yield you these. One could picture indeed the great scene; and now there was only a wilderness of shrubs, a tree growing here, a daisy there, out of the cage through which lions have roared—and the world of Rome seemed indeed dead these two thousand years.

Yet if stones could speak, these rocky hewn gradients would tell us their story. And as they told their story, they would smile—smile at the fatuous vanity of man—of Frenchmen, of historians who can see these eloquent reminders of all that Rome did for France and for French character, and yet, while every Frenchman delights in calling himself a “Latin,” he takes little account of how much

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of the Roman there is in the make-up of his character.

Emerson tells us that, "As the granite comes to the surface and towers into the highest mountains, and if we dig down, we find it below the superficial strata; so in all the details of our domestic and civil life is hidden the elemental reality, which ever and anon comes to the surface and forms the grand men who are leaders and examples, rather than the companions, of the race. The granite is curiously concealed under a thousand formations and surfaces, under fertile soils, and grasses and flowers, under well-manured arable fields, and large towns and cities, but it makes the foundation of these, and is always indicating its presence by slight but sure signs."

The "granite" in the French character—that power of resistance, that heroic splendor in active warfare as in patience under suffering, that quality of grim courage that has taken the whole world off its feet, in startled surprise, during this war was above all other wars one to try men's elemental capacities.

I find this "granite" in the Frenchman to be the Roman deposit. That stern hardening, that inflexible determination that voiced itself in the four laconic words, "*Ils ne passeront pas*" ("They shall not pass"), at Verdun, and before Paris, in 1918—surely that is the voice that echoes from the tongues of Plutarch's men, the voice that Macaulay in his *Lays of Ancient Rome* has made musical. There is

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all the stretch of two thousand years between the heroic deeds of those immortal heroes of Roman days and of the poilus who held the citadel of Verdun, and who, for the second time, drove the German barbarians across the Marne.

These soldiers of France and their chiefs are cast indeed in the Roman mold; the granite has come through the more superficial surface again to show its stern, inflexible strength.

There are other sites in France far more instinct with what we may call Roman feeling, Roman predilection for grandeur, than that which Lillebonne can offer. The Maison Carrée at Nîmes, the Theater at Orange, and at Autun, Cæsar's capital—the Augustodumum of the Romans—at Autun there are still uprising the imposing, symmetrical Portes d'Arroux and St.-André whose rechristening only emphasizes the essential Roman characteristics of these two beautiful examples of Roman art in building.

The Theater at Orange has been so Parisianized that it can be counted as holding first place among all the vestiges of antiquity we have modernized—modernized by frequentation rather than by restoration; for it has been consecrated anew to our own life and time by the frequent representations of the Comédie Française, whose open-air performances in this classic setting, with the celestial lighting of moon and stars, with the mystic background of dimmed trees and blurred foliage, set the scene for "Phèdre" and "Œdipus Rex," with an

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Athenian beauty, thus inspiring the actors themselves to communicate to their rôles the finest accents of poignant actuality.

In Paris, at the Hôtel Cluny, you will raise your eyes and head in your attempt to grasp the magnitude of the plan of the Roman Thermes (Baths), whose dimensions, were no other proofs left us, would help to paint for us the mental picture of the scale of magnificence on which Romans in Lutetia (the Roman name for Paris) fashioned their lives, in this country of their exile.

If stones could speak, these Roman ruins would give us an illuminating record of all Rome brought to France during its five hundred years of occupation, and all it left behind it, in influences as indestructible as are some of its monuments.

II

Let us lift a corner of Cæsar's tent and look upon the faces of the Romans who followed the conqueror into Gaul.

First of all one would be struck with the luxury, the magnificence, displayed in the adornment of the great Roman's surroundings. Suetonius tells us that Cæsar carried with him parquets for his tents, or the houses (*œdificiæ*) which he "requisitioned" (in our modern phrase)—parquets of mosaic and marquetry. On his tables—for there were always two—one for the richer Romans, his guests, and another to which the more prominent provincials were

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bidden to take their places—on these, his tables, silver and gold ornaments were set forth in abundance. Sober though he was himself—all great conquerors practise that virtue—Cæsar's table was as sumptuous as though he were in Rome. He knew the value of objective effect; he understood the psychic influences produced through the mere art of seeing. All these and all his other discreetly managed more or less theatrical effects were arranged with a grave, far-reaching purpose; those who came, out of either curiosity, interest, or enmity, to see what Cæsar was doing in Gaul, would go back and talk about all these wonders in the Forum.

"I think there was never seen in any army," says Gaston Boissier, of all Cæsar's historians perhaps the most enlightened as he is certainly the most sympathetic,¹ "as many men of letters, as many clever people as in that one." Those who came from Rome found the best of Rome at Cæsar's table. "They told him everything, all the most insignificant as well as all the most important things. . . . After having discussed literature or rhetoric, having listened to the verses of Matius or Quintus, . . . heard all the young men talking of all that had happened in Rome, of all the political disorders . . . private scandals, or the last *bons mots* . . . I imagine one must rather have believed they were assisting at a reunion of clever men, in some aristocratic house of the Palatine, or of the rich quarter of the Carènes, than to realize that they were in the heart of Belgium

¹ Gaston Boissier, *Cicéron et ses Amis*.

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near the Rhine, or near the sea in Gaul, or on the eve of a battle."

During the ten long years that Cæsar was busy conquering Gaul, then practically only a geographical expression, as well as Brittany, and incidentally settling quarrels with the Belgians and Germans, Gaul was being civilized.

For the Gaul, in the midst of which was set all this "magnificence" which Cæsar carried with him, along with his irresistible Roman legions, was for the most part a savage country. The land was mostly all forest. The winters were horribly cold. The Romans were confined to their quarters for long months. It was in the spring, summer, and autumn that the battles began again.

The armies of the Kaiser, in this present war, have followed the same rule, climatic conditions in middle and northern France and Belgium not having changed, as have their worlds.

While battles were being fought in those parts of Gaul and in those cities already conquered, superb Roman roads, theaters, baths, fortresses, and dwelling-houses were to be built, as all the world knows, with the same rapidity with which German generals, in our day, have built railroads, have fortified defenses, and have erected munition-works in conquered Belgium and invaded France, and by the same means. Cæsar gave the Kaiser an object-lesson, in this as in other more cruel ways, of waging war and of utilizing the energies of a conquered people. Cæsar, as did his successors, taught the Gauls to

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build roads, to fashion fine houses, to erect great edifices and strong fortresses. This is the secret of the rapid transformation of the more savage parts of Gaul into a livable country.

Cæsar, who up to the time of his Gallic campaigns had been a politician, proved himself not only a great general, but an administrator of genius. Pascal thought he was beginning to play the part of a great general rather too late in life. "He was really too old to amuse himself by conquering the world"—he was already forty-four years old. But Cæsar was wiser than Pascal. He was in Gaul not only to subdue that rich country, but chiefly to impress Rome with the sense of his greatness. He was also waiting for the moment when, politically, Rome would be ripe for his plucking.

Through the tortuous ways of men's ambitions, designs, and oftentimes their crimes, there come forth, in wondrous manner, the shaping forces which mold great men and the future of great nations.

CHAPTER XII

THE ROAD TO CAUDEBEC—AN ADVENTURE

I

WHETHER or not the road leading out from Lillebonne to Caudebec, *via* the river road, was one of those fashioned by Gallic slaves under the eyes of their Roman engineers, I have never taken the pains to investigate. As an author responsible to her readers I am conscious of shirking a duty.

Yet, surely, since all the world loves a lover, I am already forgiven. I had fallen in love, fathoms deep. As the object of my obsession was The Road itself, it was one of those sentimental attachments to which one can confess having fallen victim with no fear of the secret being that lesson in indiscretion one communicates in the telling.

The Road—was there another in France to compare to it? We had barely left Lillebonne behind us when the road made us captives to its alluring charm. It wound in and out of grain-fields; it showed us now groves where surely nymphs must still come to bathe in moonlight rays; it plunged us



CHARACTERISTIC VIEW OF NORMAN SCENERY

THE ROAD TO CAUDEBEC—AN ADVENTURE

under the green cathedral aisles of towering beeches and oaks with slender poplars for spires.

What tricks have Frenchmen played with their land to make it so lovable? Why is it even we aliens turn to it, as we do to a second country? It is not alone its beauty that draws men from all over the world, that attunes the lyre of its poets to sing its power so melodiously—a power so strong that its sons never wish to leave the home-soil, and mourn for it inconsolably when in exile. The heart of this endearing France has been enriched with a soul, one might say, with the sentient consciousness of her people.

Is it also because something of the soul of the older gods still lingers, still whispers in the harmonious music of her pines? Surely in yonder field of wheat, a massive plain of pure gold, in those ripe grains, falling in tender grace, are interwoven the tresses of the blond goddess. Ceres herself must have sown and ripened to luxuriant splendor of fertility those other vast carpets—the silvery green of the buck-wheat, the paler gold of the oat-fields, and the deeper russet of the barley.

For a perfect hour we wandered on foot through this radiant land. It would have been profanation to continue to hear a pulsating motor.

Once a part of the scene, the warm, voluptuous breath of summer at its richest swept us, enveloped us; its odors made the senses dizzy. The voices and sounds that came from behind the hedges told us we were not alone in being stirred by this intoxicating

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riot of nature. A bull's roar, in a distant field, rang out, was vibrant, sonorous as a clear trumpet call; and when the air was still once more one heard sheep moving among the grasses, nibbling, stepping softly as only sheep move daintily, in fat pastures. There was the silken rustle of bees among unseen flowers, whose odors perfumed an air already laden with sweet grain and earth scents.

Tout est beau, et tout est bien; il est bon d'être né.

For once a remembering line of Leconte de Lisle came to the lips to voice the brimming sense of well-being.

That there might be no suffering humanity to mar the scene, two women, one young, with deep-blue Norman eyes, and cheeks carnation-hued, as though in conscious connivance, suddenly confronted us. Both women stood quite still for a moment; we in our turn appeared to have communicated the shock of a mild surprise. Then the girl with the lovely eyes and deep-pink cheeks smiled. And we came nearer to smile in return and to ask:

"It is thus you carry your milk?"

"Mais oui, Madame," was the quick, unembarrassed reply. The tone, however, implied that the carrying two full pails, brimming with warm milk, pails linked to two chains that depended from the huge wooden yoke about the girl's broad, sunburnt shoulders, was indeed the only possible, or rational, method of piloting full pails in safety.

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"These ladies are not used, perhaps, to our country ways"—*aux coutumes de notre pays*—the elder woman now added. It was on her, rather than on the maiden, that our eyes were now focused. For the woman was walking, as it seemed, in a kind of cage. Two wooden rails, forming a perfect square, was the quadrangle encircling the peasant's stout frame. She held the upper rails with her hand, thus steadying the pails resting within the rails. Here were figures that surely must have stepped forth from some bucolic scene of the early centuries. Virgil himself might have sung the rustic charm of two such milkmaids.

The sturdy figures left us, to be merged in a field of pure gold at our right. A man's voice called across a near-by hedge:

"C'est toi, Gabrielle?"

"Oui, c'est moi," the girl's voice rang out, clear, unabashed.

A soldier's horizon-blues were lifted above the hedge; at sight of us, in the open road, the figure rested, immobile, across the hawthorn hedge. The wide brown eyes stared at us.

Then, with a light spring, the young man landed on his two feet in the very middle of the road. He touched his képi, in salute, and then followed in the wake of the women, across the golden field. Once we were out of sight, the uncontrollable lover's song burst out upon the warm, still air. The quickening, radiant spirit of the warm day was entering into other souls than ours.

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Even when the song died away, in the far distance, it seemed as if the earth continued the song, singing for very gladness. The voice was surely "*la voix de Dieu qui chante à travers les champs.*" And again I kept repeating, "*Tout est beau, et tout est bien; il est bon d'être né.*"

The dear, the lovable, the enticing land! How your beauty lures us, how it subdues us to your spirit, how your charm enters into one's very blood and makes of even an ardent American a patriot of two countries, the lover of two flags where there should be but one.

As our car carried us on and on, those pictures of an unsuspected France, of a France so far removed from modern innovations, this glorious spectacle of a France abloom with the pontifical glory of prosperity, followed us, warmed and comforted us. Surely there had been no war; there was no devastated, outraged France; there were no poor creatures living not a hundred kilometers away, in roofless houses, behind glassless windows, with the horror still confronting them, night and day, of their towns and villages a mass of ruins, with no house to call home, and with nothing left of former prosperity but a signed paper, ready for governmental relief.

This spectacle of horror on which we had looked only a short time since was surely a bad dream, a vision of a Dantesque hell. The true France was this country, teeming with ripe harvests, where sheep nibbled in deep grasses, where nothing had been changed for centuries, and where the song of a lover

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carried on the long chorus of lovers that had sung itself out under groves of silvery beeches and wide-spreading oaks for all the years since Cæsar went back to Rome to die at the base of Pompey's statue.

II

Farms close to the road, here and there a villa with its trim French garden and the century-old trees in the park, warned us that the road was coming to an end. Our lyrical moment was already a part of our past.

The gardens we liked best, we avowed, were the true French gardens, not those planned by or after Le Nôtre, but the farmers', the peasants' gardens. In the farms and thatched houses we passed windows were geranium-trimmed; there were Gloire-de-Dijon, Roses Trémières, or purple clematis starring the dull brick or timbered façades with their white, pink, or deep-purple flowers; wallflowers, sans-soucis, phlox, and lavender bloomed beside cabbages, salad, and the dung-heap. We were about to protest against the dung-heap with all the vigor of American distaste for noxious sights and odors, when something happened.

An adventure met us, cap in hand, so to speak.

A motor-cycle, coming along at a furious rate, slowed up as they saw us approach.

A warning hand signaled us to stop. As the vehicle was swept beyond our wings, we saw that the two occupants were unmistakably Americans,

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and both, we thought, were officers in our army. One of the two, the one seated in the "wife-killer's seat," as both motors stopped, uncoiled his long legs, put one leg over the side of the car, and stood up, saluting, as he walked toward us.

"Sorry to stop you, ladies, but we're lost. Can you understand our lingo?" The voice, which was the voice of the Far West, no more seemed to belong to the superb creature before us than had it been the organ for transmitting speech through the lips of a Greek god come to life.

Our amazingly beautiful compatriot—for beautiful he was—had a gigantesque height. The slim, supple body stood as straight as a Northern pine. But the classic cut of those perfect features—the somewhat small, exquisitely chiseled face, with its straight Greek nose, the oval-shaped cheeks, the rounded chin, and eyes set far apart as are the eyes of an Adonis, in marble—eyes shaded by long drooping lids, through which deep-blue pools reflected just now a mingling of embarrassed perplexity and mirth—where were the ethnic strains that answered the riddle of that pure Greek type?

Our young god was now leaning over with the easy, simple familiarity of kindly Western manners, both his long arms on our window-sills. Having been assured we spoke the "lingo," he was proceeding further to explain the situation, when the driver of the vehicle found himself too remote from the center of interest. Now both stood before us—the one

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fair and the other dark. And both were so amazingly tall—so superb!

The latest comer proceeded to take the narrative of their adventures from his comrade's lips. "Hope you'll excuse us, ladies, but something—I can't explain—something made us think you were English, or Americans. And we were just desperate. We got lost just the other side of that 'ere town; and once in the town, not a blessed word could any one understand. Nor could we." Here both of the men laughed heartily, as though getting lost in a French town, with no hope of being understood, were the richest of jokes.

"Yes, ma'am—and if you'll believe me, they didn't even understand when we said 'manger'" (the dark-eyed giant pronounced the word "*mange*,") "and we're starving, having left Rouen at six A.M. and wandering about these cursed roads—I beg pardon, but they *are* crisscrossy—when the sign-posts spell out every village but the ones you're looking for. This wandering about has kinder freshened our appetites."

We could meet our fellow-Americans there, and on a common ground. We confessed the keenness of edge of our own hunger. The four eyes before us beamed. They fairly radiated their youthful delight at the unconventional proposition I made. What were conventions when one had the luck to meet two such fine creatures on a highroad?

"Why not go back to Caudebec with us—and lunch? There is an excellent restaurant there, we learn."

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There was not an instant's hesitation.

"Right you are, lady," cried our fair friend, and he was seated in his death-named seat in a jiffy. The driver was nodding his curly head gaily, singing out at the top of his Western-pitched voice, "Meet you at the church!" They were speeding down the road as though going to a rendezvous with the very creatures of their choice.

In an age when the emancipated woman tells us she has no use for man, when the vote is her *dot*, and freedom her bourn, I look upon my own creeds as those buried in dusty tomes, relegated to forgotten library shelves.

I was brought up in a period when our sex still believed in man. In spite of some chastening disillusion, that early educational bias prevails over modern pronunciamientos. I have, therefore, no shame in avowing an agreeable stirring of inward excitement at the thought of continuing the acquaintance of those two young compatriots.

There was barely time to receive another agreeable surprise. The magnificent front portal of Caudebec's famous church met us, at the very entrance of the little town.

"Superb!" I ejaculated, and then feared the young giants might deem it a personal compliment. Not they. There they stood, "watching out" as they would have put it—awaiting us under the carved laces of the tall, uprising spire. They might have been two knights of an age contemporaneous with the Renaissance sculptures. They stood "at

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attention," saluting with a grace as perfect as though trained at a court.

The fairer of the two—one we were to learn was Second-Lieutenant Oscar—had heard my outburst. Twisting his head, he blushed under the sun-rays as his eyes measured the great spire. "Tall, hey? Some spire, ain't it?" But his companion had no eyes for beauty. He was bent on more carnal joys.

"That restaurant, lady, is it near?"

The appeal was couched in a tone there was no mistaking. Keen-edged hunger alone could communicate a note so sharpened with longing.

The walk onward to the quays was short, but obstructed. We had stumbled on the Caudebec market-day. The sidewalks and streets were crowded with stalls, with awnings and umbrellas. Stout girls and crimson-cheeked women were screeching their wares. And the débris and litter of day's bargains bestrewed gutters and counters.

We finally reached the river shores. A providential encounter met us at the outset. The owner of an alluring little balconied restaurant lining the street overlooking the quays came forward. Bareheaded, gray-bearded, gray-eyed, our host had rather the look of a clever provincial lawyer, or governmental official, than the owner of the little tables fluttering their table-cloth banners above us.

He solicited our custom with warmth; and such, I take it, is the very best of methods of winning either customers or a lady's hand.

"Bully—this—hey, Jack? Ladies, this is fine!"

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Our lieutenant was the man of our two friends for estimating the true value of late Gothic spires or a balcony overlooking the river.

"I say, ma'am, can you ask him if he can give us all a cocktail? Martini or Asbury Park, it's all one to me—so I get it," our darker friend shot forth, with eyes that glowed at the prospect of the hope of being gratified.

The clever-visaged man who should have been a lawyer had served Americans before. An "Asbury Park" was still an unknown, as yet an unheard-of mixture to Caudebec-en-Caux. But for the supplying of the Martini there was no hesitation: "Certainement, mon Lieutenant, dans quelques instants," was the quick reply.

With the swift descent of the cocktail, our dear American boy—he was still really a boy—beat an ecstatic tattoo on the table. The dark eyes now were glowing fireballs; the bronzed cheeks were tinted with a faint flush. All the rich sap of the unspent youth in the great frame was mounting to acclaim his content.

"Ladies, you've saved our lives! This is great! As good a cocktail as I can get in Seattle—and the omelet" (he pronounced it "omlet")—"some omlet! just swimming in butter.

"Jack—I say—think of what those boys will say when we tell them the luck we're in? Golly! won't they whine!"

The envy of those who were to "whine," who were not here to share our gay little meal, seemed to sea-

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son the dishes with a sauce peculiarly to our friend's taste. Finally we learned the reason of their jubilation. Four of them, all of our force, had had leave to go down to Havre by car. The car, however, had broken down at Rouen. "Rotten old thing—all out of repair. Front spring broke before we'd made ten kilometers." The automobile, therefore, was laboriously taken back to Rouen and handed over to the military authorities. The two others had decided to go to Havre by train.

"Not we—we'd been jogging along over this blessed country till we were sickened of trains. Camels would have taken you quicker. Queer country, France. Seems as if she's stuck fast, in a rut, about a hundred years ago, and was satisfied to stay there."

"Well, we'd made up our minds to tour it, down to the ship. So we got this little bus, and speed she does, I'll say that for her. If we hadn't got lost and any one had understood us, we'd have lost all this an' been there by this time."

As succulent dish succeeded succulent dish, the talk warmed to more personal intimacy. There was an excellent bottle of dry Haut Sauterne to facilitate confession. There was also the high rauque voices proceeding from the market-stalls lining the quays, to give our little party the sense of a peculiar intimacy. For one thing, we all speaking "the language," as Lieutenant Oscar kept repeating, as though it were a sacrosanct binding of ties. And so it is. The men's phraseology and ours were, at least,

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two thousand miles apart. But whatever their lineage, or however different their manner of speech, we were all of one country, we spoke the same tongue, and we understood that deeper language still—the one that needs no translation nor translator, since it is the voice of the American soul.

It sometimes seems as though if certain of our brothers—more often our sisters in the favored East—had lost their souls through too lavish gifts of the gods of wealth and plenty, our Western compatriots had found theirs.

At a certain turn the talk took, over our coffee, I found my words choking me; there was a mist before my eyes. The way Oscar spoke of his mother was the more moving because of the perfect naturalness in which he conveyed his feeling for her.

Oscar had come over to my side; we had squared our chairs to look forth the easier on the busy scene below. The good cheer had heightened the young man's beauty, as it had loosened the rivets of a certain self-contained restraint. He fixed his eyes on an old woman trundling a big load of potatoes.

"Lord! how they work their women here! See that poor old thing! It makes one ache to see her," he cried out. I ventured to suggest the loss of manpower, the one and a half million dead and wounded, the wrecked parts of France where every available man was needed.

"Yes—oh yes, I know! I've seen it all. I know. It's awful, though, the sufferings of women over here. Why—in our country—no man 'd stand for it."

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I made him go on. I felt certain he would yield to my urging. I was eager to learn the mystery of that face of his—of his delicate, considerate ways with women, and of his sympathy for suffering.

“Yes—you’re right— I’ve had a good mother—the best. You see, we’re a large family—there’s six of us boys—and one girl. Father’s had luck, out there in Washington state. And so have we. Between us all, we hold about four thousand acres. Our sheep and cattle have good grazing-land.”

“But servants—what do you do for help? Your mother?”

A new kind of smile parted the perfectly curved lips. “Oh-h, mother—she don’t work. We don’t let her do nothing. Why, there’s six of us, as I told you, and all healthy and strong. There’s always two or three of us around. She’s done her share. She brought us up. We don’t let *her* work.”

“You’re all good cooks, then—”

“Well, there’s a difference.” And the young giant laughed till his body shook. “Guess you wouldn’t want to eat Fred’s mixtures. He’s the worst! We let him feed the pigs, and even they know what they’re in for!” And again his convulsive laughter shook him.

He needed no further prodding. The look backward to the home farm had kindled the home fires. He had a farm awaiting him already, he said, with a blush, “for her—and she’s a real girl!” They were to be married as soon as he reached “the farm”—at his father’s, “for she’s an orphan, quite alone

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in the world—same country her people came from as mother's."

I held my breath. I felt I was on the very trail of the mystery.

"And your mother came from—?"

"Her folks came from Italy—somewhere—'way down south—in the heel, as she always says with a laugh; calls it 'down at heel'!"

Italy—down at the heel. Of course, here was the riddle of those exquisite features made plain. For down in certain portions of Calabria there are still traditions so purely of Greek or Latin origin that old marriage customs, old ways of burial, classic dances—such out-of-date customs are still in vogue. This transmitted inheritance of a remote Greco-Latin race might explain the perfectly cut features. But the frame—that Herculean, yet graceful shape?

As the young man kept on, telling of his moonlight rides across the great stretches of country, another clue was given. "Father's people, you see, coming from the far north, from Sweden—he likes trees. And so we've planted no end."

It was all made clear. This union of strength and beauty was the heritage from the north and south, from Swedish prowess and Greco-Roman transmission of purity of type. America, however, its soul and its sympathetic qualities, had put its seal on her son. Oscar was American, in feeling, in chivalric sentiment, and in tenderness, as in his possession of that saving salt of humor, so peculiarly an American trait.

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Of the war, or of his part in his Argonne experiences, Oscar was singularly reticent. His *Croix de Guerre* with its many stars attested his exploits. The record of this, his more recent past, he appeared to have wiped off memory's slate.

"Awful—yes—it was awful. But we won out," was as much as he would say when we touched on the war, on our part and his, in the great, the stupendous struggle.

I have seen the same reluctance in others of our soldiers to dwell on battles and the horrors they had passed through. The pride and glory in their own participation in this greatest of modern wars will come later. Distance will give its right perspective to each individual effort. The Anglo-Saxon instinctive shrinking from obtruding personal feats of courage will yield to the enhancing effects of time and its glorifying vision.

III

I perceived my young friend lost nothing of the busy scene of the stage set just below us. His blue eyes followed the Caudebecoise belles, in their bright jerseys, tight skirts, and bare necks and arms. Caudebec had adopted the modernized "back-to-nature" fashions. Older, more rural customs held good in the bared heads and in the banding together of these strolling girls. Linked arm-in-arm, by groups of six and seven, these maidens chatted and laughed; some could be heard humming a tune as they passed along the booths.

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"Some girls, hey, ma'am! I reckon they're lonesome, some of 'em. Ain't no boys around—not many. Too bad! Mostly old ones one sees now all about."

Oscar's pity, all-embracing though it was, did not carry him to the point of attempting to enliven the maidens in their "lonesome" walk.

The owners of the dusty automobiles, cars of a before-the-war character, rattling, unpainted, and with road-worn tires, these provincial comers to the fair were indeed all old or middle-aged. The men would climb out of their seats, take off their dingy cover-coats, help a wife or a mother to descend, and then, having steadied the car against a stone parapet alining the shore, would leave the car unprotected. Some ten or fifteen were thus abandoned. Oscar had his reflections to make on as commendable a proof of Norman honesty.

"They're an honest lot, these people. But at a bargain—golly!—they'd cheat a Jew, or a Scotchman. Squeeze you! They'd squeeze the life out of a pawnbroker!"

"Yes," I replied, "the Normans are the most grasping of all others in France. There is, however, a survival of a curious sense of honesty among them. Those golden bracelets Rollo hung on the tree—" I began.

"Golden bracelets? That's a new wrinkle. Never heard of that." And I must tell the story of Rollo's hanging of this jewel on the tree, in this Normandy of twelve centuries ago, this his own dominion, and

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one he proposed to rule in honest ways, thus teaching his "pirates" the first rule governing civilized men. Oscar listened to my tale as might a child, with the same still, rigid pose, with the same intent, fixed gaze. When I finished he sighed.

"It's great—that story. And it's great, too, to be educated. That's what's hard to get out where we are. Father would have sent some of us to college. Mother was willing, though then, when we were poorer, it meant a lot more work. But none of us went. We weren't educated enough to know all it meant. We know, now it's too late." The great blue eyes looked away from the life that was playing out its part below us. What did they see, those deep pools of light? Long, wide stretches of billowy grain and grass-lands. The wild dashes, across untilled fields, on bronco ponies, to round up flocks and herds? The swift, sharp air cutting across treeless plains—was this free, fierce wind striking its notes above the noisy Norman voices? Whatever the words he had uttered had conjured up, of scenes and of lost chances in life, the vision left my new friend pensive.

The moment's pause gave me also time for reflection. Surely there is a higher education which our American life instils, and which one would not exchange for all the curriculum of the most renowned universities. It is this flowering of sympathy, this amazing understanding, this quick, clear insight; but above all else it is the chivalric feeling and sentiment toward women, children, and suffering humanity,

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which makes one go down on one's knees in gratitude for having been born in a land where such virtues are engendered. It is this comprehension that "all the world is kin" that stirred the soul of America in our recent war. In all history there is no page so bright, so glorious as that one our dear land can inscribe—when America semi-starved itself, as a nation, that she might feed the world. If you can match as humanitarian an act, in all the long record of man's deeds, I know it not.

This dear boy beside me was, therefore, indeed "educated" in the higher, deeper sense of the meaning we should give to such training. He and thousands like him brought to France not only the miraculous help of their courage and daring—the courage and daring that helped to gain the great victory; they brought to this older race something even more precious. Chivalry had not died with the eight thousand nobles who perished at the battle of Agincourt; it had crossed the Atlantic. Something of all this I said to Oscar, and also this:

"At Autun, once Cæsar's capital, two thousand of our soldiers (M. P.'s) were stationed in the Burgundian town for over two years.

"'When they left,' an inhabitant of the town told me, last summer, 'there was all the town to see them off, filling the streets. Old men and young, and all of us women, we were all in tears. And the children, too. For there was not one of us who had not received some kindness, help of some kind from those wonderful men—ces hommes merveilleux. If the

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Americans met an old man or a woman along the road, coming to market, or a little girl or boy, they always slowed down and took them in. And every child in Autun had candy, and many of us who hadn't seen white flour since the war had our weekly gifts in their white bread. And if our babies were sick, the American major would come, if our good French major was away. Oh, we loved your soldiers! We shall never forget them. C'étaient de vrais gentil-hommes.'"

On recounting this tribute to Oscar as conduct which seemed to me proof of a very remarkable education, his quick answer came:

"Oh yes, most of our men, I think, was pretty decent. But being civil ain't book-learning. An' that's what counts."

Is it, indeed? "The important respect in regard to travel was" (is) "with respect to its advantages to one's country."¹ Oscar, though he knew it not, will have continued his true "education," though it be not "book-learning," in this great school to which he has been, of war and travel. He and thousands of others will bring countless advantages from their terrible and yet glorious experiences, both as warriors and as travelers, to that distant Far West—to their own country.

¹ Louis Einstein, *Italian Renaissance in England*.

CHAPTER XIII

CAUDEBEC

I

WITH the departure of our compatriots, there was a sensible drop in the emotional temperature. The air seemed to have lost its quickening. A certain vibratory force was gone from the scene and the atmosphere.

A steamboat of somewhat familiar outlines aroused us from our nursery state of lament. The boat, white in color, not over-large, its decks black with its cargo of passengers, was sweeping past Caudebec with the insolent air of ignoring the fact that Caudebec was a port.

Could it be our own boat for Rouen—the one we had incontinently deserted? A voice at our elbow left us in no doubt as to our tragic fate.

“Mais oui, Madame, it is the boat to Rouen. But you see it did not stop, as there were no passengers.”

“But—but—it doesn’t stop? It goes on? and yet we were officially told—by the captain the boat stopped at Caudebec,” was gasped, such perfidy seeming unbelievable in any man wearing a uniform.

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"Yes—the boat stops—Madame, when there are passengers," calmly reiterated the restaurant-keeper.

Seeing consternation still holding us fast, he added, as though to hold out a beacon of hope: "If ces dames wish to take the boat on its next trip, perhaps these ladies will give me warning—in time."

On further consultation it appeared, though Caudebec was a port officially, in point of exact fact the river current ran too swiftly to permit of the Havre boat making a landing. "One embarks sometimes over there—in a small boat—or over yonder." Our host pointed to various landing-places along the docks.

The situation now assumed a humorous aspect. Here was a boat, the one and only means of communication, by the most beautiful river in France, between two great ports—between Havre and Rouen! That there might be no waste of time or coal, no passengers meant no stop. How was the traveler to learn such secrets of maritime economy? No single guide-book warned the ignorant or unwary of so important a fact. On the whole water-front of Caudebec no signal or sign conveyed so important a warning to native or foreigner.

This river traffic was conducted, apparently, on the principle that time was best spent when lost; that to miss a boat, to wait for forty-eight hours until the same boat should recommence the same eccentric, irresponsible antics, was a matter of no consequence, since the belated traveler had all

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Caudebec, St.-Wandrille, Le Trait, Jumièges, and Duclair as compensations.

We were not so dull that we could not accept a gift of such amplitude, of such promise of enjoyment. We had been surprised; we had even burned with indignation, feeling we had been treacherously dealt with. We now took the broad hint chance gave us. We proceeded to enjoy ourselves prodigiously.

Two full, long days! And with what a country to explore! We started forth in a rush of recovered spirits to find Caudebec's charms immeasurably enhanced.

The market, to begin with what was immediately set before us, was in all the flutter of tearing off its finery. It was proceeding to show us every rib, so to speak, of its naked anatomy. It was, in some way, as uninteresting a performance as when a stout woman, on the stage, persists in taking off her gown. Here, at least, we enjoyed the advantage of being able to turn our backs on the performance.

We left the scene of the quays, strewn with boards, with iron poles, with women piling heavy baskets into deep wagons, and men winding ribbons and folding laces away, with fingers as dexterous as a woman's. The uses to which husbands may be put have never been fully grasped by the Anglo-Saxon spouse. It is only the Latin woman who, with clear-sighted, sociological instinct, once launched on the matrimonial venture, quietly decides which of the two is better fitted to carry on the various branches life *à deux* develops.

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The Frenchwoman, for long centuries, has been an unconscious factor of labor-saving force. If her *homme* be the stronger, the more capable of the two, linked together as they are to fight life's battle, the French wife subsidizes; she accepts and "makes good" her place as second, in the struggle for success. But if she discovers a weakling in the man the *dot* system has allotted her, then as *maîtresse femme* it is she who rules—and her husband winds ribbons and laces, while she tosses baskets or heavy boards, weighing kilos, into great carts.

II

There were so many alluring side-shows, so to speak, at Caudebec that we found a certain difficulty in immediately reaching its chief, its supreme, attraction.

There were streets that took the unmistakable curves of streets which had been girdled by stout walls. They were narrow, tortuous, with the beguiling air of wandering, now, unhindered into the open country.

La rue de la Boucherie offered tempting discoveries. Among lines of houses old enough to reward any search after antiquities, there were two that were ancestors of all the others. Built of stone, with narrow slits for windows, these wonderful survivors of Caudebec's wars and sieges had known what life in the fifteenth century was like. Other dwellings, with wooden façades, with here and there a sculptured door-lintel or a window-frame embroidered

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with rude, defaced flowers, such sixteenth and seventeenth century houses made of every street in Caudebec the true presentment of the town as it appeared in those now remote centuries.

The charm of this Old World reality was enhanced by the singular calm Caudebec preserves. Now that the market was closed, there was a curious, brooding silence in the streets. Sabots' clicking snap on the stone-paved thoroughfare—and then all would be still. The hour would strike from unseen clocks, in thin, strident voices—voices still telling the time to ears long since dead, they seemed. Ours were the only footfalls in the street leading to the curiously interesting, ancient-featured Place d'Armes.

We had the Place to ourselves—we and the old houses and the uprising, the amazingly beautiful, church spire. It was an uncovenanted piece of pure luck to have captured the famous spire at this distance and from just this point of view. Thus seemingly detached from its base, its florescent coronal rising skyward, the full glory of its sumptuous carvings, its lofty height, and its tapering grace were thus intensified, outlined against a sky whose blues were like unto a solid curtain of velvet. One looked and looked, and never could one weary of so completely enrapturing a spectacle.

To tear the eyes away, and to seek lesser, diminished sensations, was a concession made to the really alluring features of the Place d'Armes. One might have thought the houses, set about in such casual fashion, had been thus built to form what all the

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world now travels to look upon—a picturesque grouping.

There was a house abutting on the Place that came to a point; there were others that slid away, showing a timbered side, a low wooden door, and chimneys old enough to know better than to topple over tiled roofs as steep as an Alpine coasting-hill.

All these old streets led us finally to the central Caudebec jewel—to the northern end of the church.

I have no hesitation in stating that to stand before this architectural triumph is, in itself, enough to reward one for a journey up the Seine. A regalia insignia of royal magnificence do these sculptures seem. Why should the word "royal"—such a truly beautiful word—be used solely to define what appertains to the accident of lineage? Surely men who could design and execute so noble a structure as this Caudebec church are crowned—doubly crowned, since, for long centuries, men have bowed in homage to their genius.

From the mellow face of the great spire the eye is carried on to the elaborate traceries of the windows: from these one's gaze is fixed on all the delicate, intricate carvings that make the spire rise up like wrought lace-work, transfixed, by some miracle, to the solidity of stone. France, in this, its finest spire save one, La Tour de Beurre, at Rouen, carries its lilies to the altar of the skies, since some of the traceries are in the shape of a fleur-de-lis.

There are other revealing notes by which the carvers have confessed their labors were not done

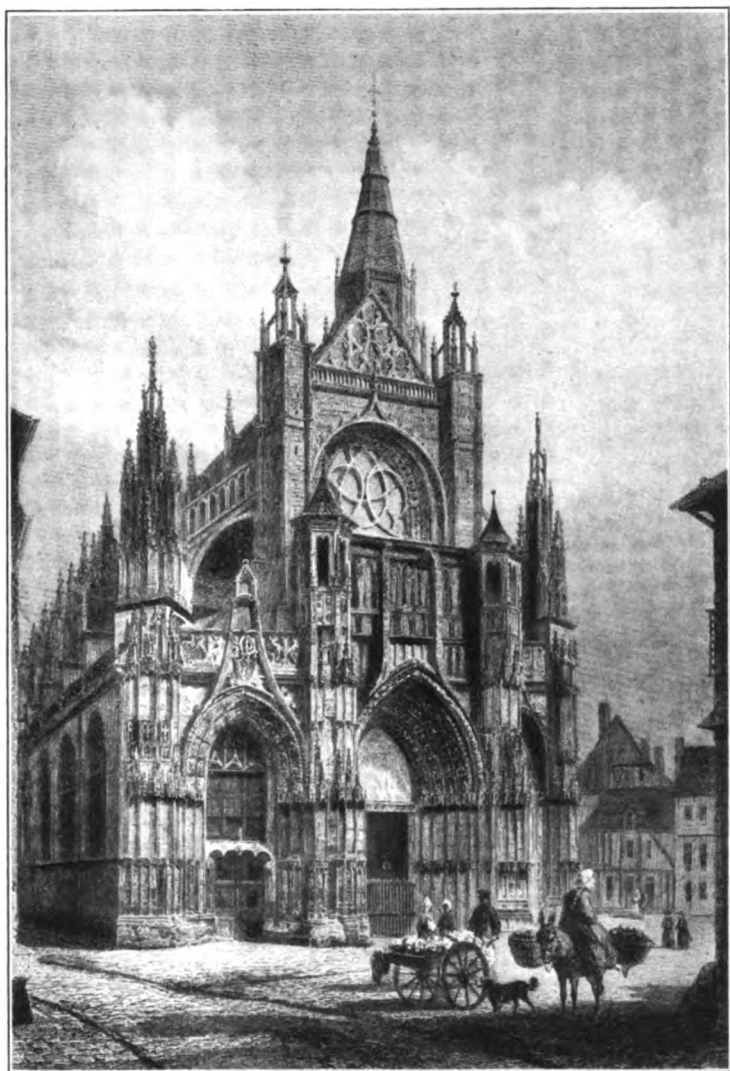
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merely for the day's pay; there were love and piety expressed, as well as grace and novelty of design, in the long parapet about the roof; these traceries are an invocation to the Virgin, cut in stiff but ornamental Gothic letters.

After three centuries of Gothic invention, architects were forced to devise more and more elaborate designs. The flamboyant of the fifteenth century is here merged into the Renaissance architectural style. Pugin will have it that much of the ornamental part of the church, its windows and carvings, belong rather to the domestic than to an ecclesiastical order of architecture.

The church indeed was finished during the reign of Francis I, when the floridity of the Renaissance was becoming the great fashion in building. But the Renaissance ornamentation does not in the least affect the general design. There is true Gothic unity and harmony in the church, as a whole.

The great front portal is, or was, an open book by which the laity could read their Bible history in a language not dead, but in the living language of the illustrated, sacred story. Now that most of the saints, the apostles, and the heavenly hierarchy are headless, the biblical grouping and meaning must be guessed. The wealth of carving, however, lavished on every inch of this exterior proves that neither time nor patience was valued, as socialists have decided labor should be in our days. With the multiplicity of books, the multiplicity of sacred statues is as reduced a population on church fronts as statis-



CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME AT CAUDEBEC

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tics prove the birth-rate has fallen off since the preaching of the doctrine of Malthus. Every church, the simplest as well as the most elaborate, is the more precious, therefore, since there is no re-lighting the tapers of faith that produced Norman and Gothic masterpieces.

The beautiful geometric design of the rose-window, below the roof, on the western front, sends one into the interior of the church to see the much-praised glass.

On entering the side porch one is impressed at once by the singular lightness and brilliancy of the interior. The genial glow from the beautiful stained-glass windows permeates the whole edifice.

It may be because the figures, motives, and composition of the figures in these charming windows are nearer to our own era than the earlier thirteenth-century glass; whatever the reason, these figures are peculiarly appealing. In color many of the windows are extraordinary. There are combinations of deep orange, yellows, and blues, also of purples and blues that produce unusual polychrome effects, giving to the side aisles and nave the gaiety one might look for in a Renaissance banqueting-hall rather than in a sacred edifice.

The singular and original perspective in the Lady Chapel has always excited the curiosity of architects, its peculiar construction having been a matter of discussion for some centuries. The Entombment of Christ is chiefly interesting as proving the contrast between the earlier sculptural and more modern work. Christ's figure is expressive and full of feeling.

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III

It is said that Caudebec is, and has been for long years, an irresistible magnet to draw our English cousins to delight in its attractions. "*C'est le rendez-vous des Anglais en été,*" a native of Caudebec said to me, with a smile, and there was an anticipatory glitter of hope in his bright eyes. He was counting the sous that would pour into his till when the tourist season began.

There are the best of reasons for English lovers of beauty bending their steps toward Caudebec. We have ever a sentimental leaning for that which we once owned.

Caudebec, after a resistance of only six days, in 1419, gave herself up to the English, and began her reign as a fortified English stronghold. She became French again only after Charles VII, having been taught how to fight for his kingdom by a woman—a girl, rather—was able to rescue this part of his domain from English ownership. The historians record "a solemn entry into the town of Caudebec by the French king."

It is well for us, in these hectic days succeeding the most scientifically waged war of all history, with northern France and most of Belgium the all but ruined victims of German systematized, destructive design, to remember what befell France in that fifteenth century.

Henry V of England may be likened in a certain sense to Kaiser William. He was a far greater man

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than the German Emperor—but he, as did William, meant to own France, and to crush her, if necessary. In point of character Henry had far more traits in common with William the Conqueror than with William the Runaway. At seventeen Henry was already a dreaded leader of men and of armies. He first subdued his own subjects to his rule; he then turned to crush out French intrigues with the Lancastrian House.

First, Henry captured Harfleur. This key to the Seine led the way to all the rich Norman lands—with Rouen as its richest prize, with Paris and Calais beyond. All of these great possessions, in the end, were his—with eleven thousand of the nobles of France dead, most of them left rotting on the slimy field of Agincourt.

Caudebec, as we have seen, was one of the earlier captures of English prowess. The town was greatly fortified; it became an English stronghold with its walls, towers, ramparts, and moats.

When Charles VII was able, during his long reign of thirty-two years, to see his France freed from English rule and English terrors, in what a state of waste, of devastation, was he to find his all but ruined kingdom! Normandy, that had been to England what Egypt had been to Rome—its granary of abundance—had been despoiled, ravished of its women and children, its strong men dead of famine, or forgotten in prison dungeons, or deported to England, were they skilled workmen.

This lovely, prosperous Pays de Caux, the province

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of all these rich and flourishing Norman towns and cities, had been despoiled of men and of moneys to the point that hungry wolves were the armies that succeeded the armies of the English conqueror.

Henry, having won Paris in a single day, and Rouen only after its superb resistance of six months, died in *his* Château de Vincennes, in August, 1422. On his death-bed he bade his great chiefs never to give up Normandy.

Caudebec must wait twenty-seven years for its deliverance. Once more Norman and French, and Norman energy, Norman vigor, Norman enterprise sprang to force their way to prosperity once more. In an incredibly short time Caudebec's hats and gloves had won the prize for excellence in the European markets.

Caudebec still sits, in high noon, under the rich Normandy sunshine, with now fewer attractions than in those turbulent days when she was a citadel, a capital important enough to make men love her, suffer for her, and with great captains and kings fighting for her possession.

But her stock of drawing-attractions is still potentially important. She is still the complete little town, with her streets embellished with authentic fourteenth-, fifteenth-, and sixteenth-century houses—houses which witnessed the "solemn entry" of Charles VII; houses through whose narrow windows the existent citizens stood, cheering till they were hoarse the beloved king who was the first democratic king since Henri IV practised what his *alter*

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ego, Sully, had promulgated as a principle, "*Chacun chez soi, Chacun pour soi.*"

The old curving streets, the antique houses, are the survivors of wars, sieges, dynasties, the Revolution, the Terror, Waterloo, Sedan, and the great war. As ancestors hand on to their descendants a treasured, ancestral possession, old Caudebec transmits to us the jewel of her church.

CHAPTER XIV

A GREAT ABBAYE—ST.-WANDRILLE

I

THE morning of our departure from Caudebec was one of those festival days of summer which make one believe in the value, in the immense importance of being alive. Every act, the least as well as the gravest, seemed to assume portentous proportions. There was before us the joy of setting out, of going forth once more to unknown parts of *la douce France*. The tune of life and the day were to sing in concert.

"You have a beautiful day for your journey, Mesdames," said our courteous host. If it be true that the art of living is understood nowhere as it is in France, it is also equally true that good manners are still to be met along French roads and in inns that are "far from the great world."

Our host was offering us not only his gracious courtesy; he was placing his intelligence at our disposal. Having learned we proposed to make a day of it—a whole long day in the open air—"Then, Madame, you had best take a luncheon along. There is no good restaurant until you reach Duclair.

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And as these ladies do not count the hours by the clock when they are visiting old houses and fine churches—" The clever innkeeper never finished his sentence. His meaning smile and his quick eyes, that had conveyed more than he said, told us he knew more of our ways than could be guessed by the more or less revealing fact of the day and night spent under his roof. If you have a secret to keep, if you desire to cloak your ways, or your habits, or even your tastes, do not prolong your stay in a French provincial town. There are no eyes sharper, there is no scent more keen in hounding secrecy to earth, there is no one who has the lay detective's talent more highly developed than a clever provincial in a little, dull French town. Where nothing happens that is not known in an hour to every one every stranger is a "suspect" unless he comes under the welcome guise of a traveler.

It was for an increase, indeed, in the regiment of *le touriste qui passe* that our interesting host was now sighing. He had openly confessed that he saw us depart with regret. He was buoyed up, however, he quickly added, by the inflated hope of our return "next year and with many more Americans."

"You see, Madame," he proceeded to explain, with his engaging air of sincerity, "it is only the Americans who can really help us." It was our turn to smile a meaning smile. It was translated as being a smile of pride—pride that held in it the virtue of a promise. "Yes—once the Americans come then France will begin to live again. To Germany they

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will not go. No. To where, then? To us—to France they will come. A little time they may spend in England, perhaps, but it is here—in our beautiful country that has been so outraged—so ravished—it is here where their own American soldiers have fought they will come. The car will shake her less if it be placed thus.”

It was to a dusty, golden-hued bottle our kind host referred, and not to either of us, the forerunners of the tourist horde who were to save France.

The painstaking owner of the inn had been as careful of our comfort as though he felt that every delicate attention he could pay us was to be in the nature of an advertisement of the “good-wine-that-needs-no-bush” order to all America. He had seen to the secure placing of the full luncheon-basket; he had blocked the bottle of wine between a bag and a suit-case; and he had handled the bottle as though it were an infant in arms—as do all men who know good wine. Having paid us such parting courtesies, and having as delicately conveyed to us our mission in life—for the coming year—there was nothing left for the most perfect of hosts than to make us his farewell salute. It was given in finished French form—from the waist.

“We have left a bit of old France behind us,” I sighed.

“And look—it might have been the boat on which Madame Sévigné crossed the Loire three hundred years ago.”

The *bac* crossing from the opposite shore might

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indeed have claimed ancestral descent from those *diligences à l'eau* that took days to carry the traveler from towns reached, in our day, in a few hours.

The barge now nearing the Caudebec shores was carrying two *char-à-bancs*, one laden with pigs, the other with hens in coops, peasants, a baby in a perambulator, a huge touring-machine with two English officers, and a cart with a towering mound of hay. Yes, eliminate the automobile and perambulator, or change them into one of the seventeenth-century carriages, with their huge wheels, multiple springs, pockets, silken curtains, and deep, feather-tufted seats, and to a court lady of Louis XIV's reign there would have been no "novelty" to talk about in Paris in thus crossing the Seine in a barge with a tortoise-like speed.¹

II

In approaching the famous Abbaye of St.-Wandrille—Maeterlinck's home for many years—the road itself seems in collusion with the witchery of the abbaye to create what our French friends so admirably define as *un état d'esprit*.

On leaving Caudebec—that ancient town on the broad highway of the Seine, a town that, in its way, is also a highway between the two ports of Rouen and Havre—and on entering the little secluded

¹ For automobilists desiring to take to the road to reach either Trouville, Deauville, or Caen, by this *bac* one can join the highroad at Pont-Audemer, skirting the edge of the Bretonne forest, along the Seine shores. It is one of the most beautiful roads in Normandy.

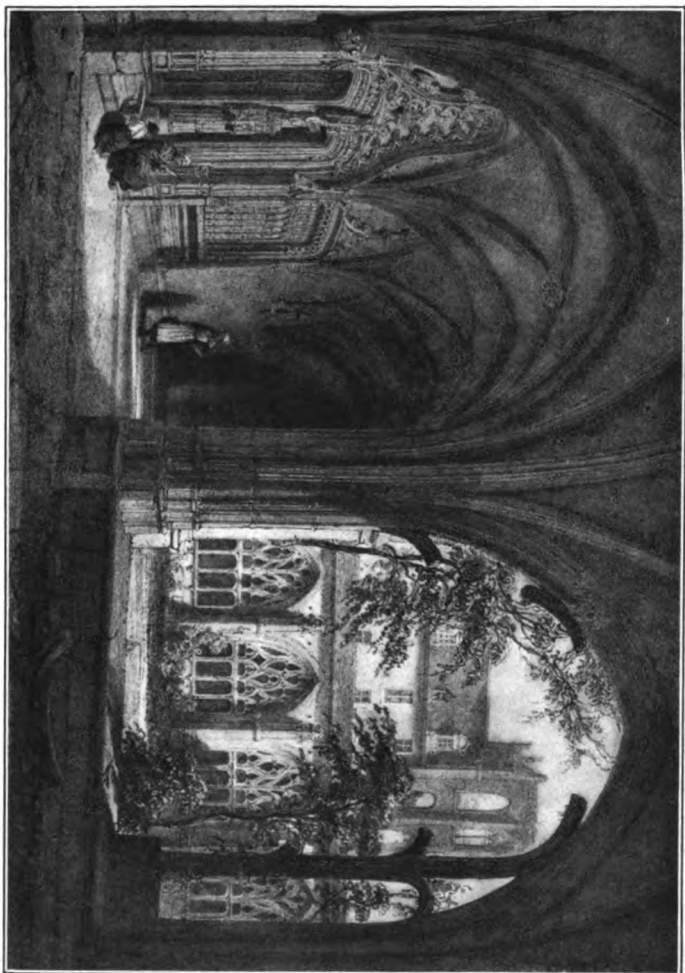
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hamlet of St.-Wandrille, one has the sensation of having passed from a scene pulsating with life to one more or less dead and inanimate. Preserved, as it were, under glass as a model for a scene-painter or a novelist in search of a setting for a crime or an elopement, the houses of the hamlet are gathered close together, as though for purposes of protection, or possibly for conspiracy.

A great portal looms into view. Its arms, its deep-vaulted entrance, its two pavilions, and its turrets rise up with singular impressiveness. Such a portal would give to any road a grand air. Only princes, in all the splendor of their plumes and slashed doublets, mounted on stately steeds (one could not use the simpler noun of "horse" to designate a mount stepping beneath so stately an entrance), and these stately steeds should have golden harnesses.

The road that keeps on, beyond this majestic pile, proves what a mere road can achieve with a group of superb trees, it is true, for decoration. Opposite the great entrance to the Abbaye of St.-Wandrille there is a most effective grouping of the rear end of a low Norman church. The choir windows—now enlarged, we were to find later—had some charming stained glass by Lusson. The sixteenth-century chapel, in the happy setting of old elms and lime-trees, made a remarkably harmonious ensemble.

There was a feature even more alluring than the effective grouping made by the road, the church, and the uprising grandeur of the abbaye entrance. There



CLOISTER OF THE ABBAYE OF ST.-WANDRILLE, NEAR CAUDEBEC
(NOW THE HOME OF MAURICE MAETERLINCK)

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was a homely look about it all. There was something surprisingly, unexpectedly English in the picture.

The two English historians, Freeman and Green, will tell you, at length, the *raison d'être* of certain aspects of French roads and French fields, and why they recall to Englishmen England's landscapes. The Normans, when they came to England, brought with them the lessons taught them by the Angles in the early Anglo-Saxon invasions to Gaul.¹ And French historians will complacently descant, in their turn, on the effective English imitation of purely Normandy lanes, Normandy hedges, and Norman ways of tree-planting, by English farmers, to be seen in England.

Here was a road and a setting that proved any model historians may claim for it. I mark it as one unique in combining both artistic charm, architectural beauty and interest, while preserving singularly homelike features. One could build a house and settle down in such surroundings, and feel at home in it, although in a foreign land.

St.-Wandrille, as did all the founders of those medieval monasteries, must have chosen the site of his abbaye because of some such commendable feeling. There could be no sense of exile in so lovely and picturesque a spot. To insure against monotony,

¹ "As we pass now through Normandy it is English history which is around us . . . The very look of its country and its people seem familiar to us. . . . The fields about Caen, their dense hedgerows, their elms, their apple orchards, are the very picture of an English countryside."
—Green, *History of the English People*, vol. i, p. 107.

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there were the undulating hills; for fields and pastures there was all the land available from the abbaye inclosures to Caudebec—with Caudebec itself, at one time, under the sovereignty of the convent. There was also a certain security from pirates, since the buildings were not directly on the river. With all these advantages, the Benedictine brotherhood not only prospered, but they waxed rich. The robber barons of that remote eleventh and the succeeding centuries could always ransom their future from too prolonged purgatorial discomforts by lavish gifts to a monastery. Princes and kings, as well as lesser grandees, donated vast sums to convents, built them, and gave them great privileges, as in our day a Rothschild or a Rockefeller endows a college or founds a hospital. Ways of giving change with the centuries. But as “the poor ye have always with you,” so it seems are there always, though never enough, princely givers to help the underworld to become, in time, the upper world.

III

A modest door, beyond which, in a tangle of brushwood and drooping trees, one reads the warning sign, “Visitors are admitted to inspect the abbaye between the hours of ten and twelve, and from two to six,” produced an unpleasant awakening to the fact that we might have nearly an hour to wait. In our eagerness to have the whole day for our outing, we had forgotten that in France no one’s toilet, whether

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it be that of old or young ladies, of old churches or abbayes, is made before ten in the morning. This universal custom dates, I imagine, from the grand old Bourbon days. The great world, whose passion for cards and high stakes kept torches and candles blazing half the night, must naturally prolong its beauty sleep into the best hours of the morning.

Remembering that a conventual life set an example of quite other matutinal customs, I boldly rang the tinkling bell. If the odor of sanctity no longer pervaded the abbaye ruins, perhaps a lingering monkish courtesy might win us admission.

The tinkling bell had long since ceased to agitate, feebly, the still, abbatial air. Slow, uncertain steps finally assured us that our appeal was to meet some sort of answer. The answer came, given with a sweetness and gentle kindness which made us ashamed of having doubted of our reception. "*Mais oui, ces dames sont, il est vrai, très matinales*"—was the quiet welcome. The old, dried, thin lips murmured, "as I am here to show visitors the way about—one hour is the same to me as another. If the ladies will come this way—"

"This way" led us directly to a towering archway of trees.

"You are standing in the very middle of the church—in the nave," was the startling announcement. This was assuredly a remarkably quick jump, as it were, from even a romantic highroad to a church so completely destroyed one must substitute nature's arches for the original vaulting.

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At our left, however, there was a beautiful Gothic ruin still rich in exquisite carvings.

Our gentle guide led us from this last vestige of the older thirteenth-century church to the cloister.

Under these fine Gothic arches it was easier for imagination to recreate the antique splendor of the famous abbaye, of its misty and mystic beginning in the year 645; of St.-Wandrille looming out of the shadows of that dim past, drawing hither men, scholars, poets, and writers turning monks to dedicate their lives to God and to the furthering of letters and, later, of science and literature.

And yet—and yet—what air, in among these remaining proofs of St.-Wandrille's former splendor, were we breathing? What was the still, pursuing shadow that followed, blurring the bright gold of the sunshine? What was the burden of depression that seemed to have settled down upon our very shoulders? Whence came the melancholy we could not shake off?

An indescribable sadness, like a pall, haunted the branches of the drooping trees. The grass-grown alleys, leading to the park, wore a tragic air. What unnamed, what unrecorded crimes had been committed here, leaving their haunting shadows to people so fair, yet so desolate a realm?

How still, how mournful is the silence!

Though the decorating glory of the August sun descends like a cascade of light on weeping elms, on ruined shrines, and on delicate carvings, there is no lifting of that pall of sadness.

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Then one remembers why ghosts walk here, in these grounds, under all these arches of St.-Wandrille in clear daylight.

In this pulseless air Mélisande has relived her strange, enigmatic existence. She came to life again in this "extraordinary stillness." The author of her creation heard here also the very "water sleeping." Sorrow-stricken from her birth, she who could not smile found herself once more a wanderer among "all these sad forests without light."

One follows the fugitive, illusive creature from her entering, with Goland, into the ancestral château, to learn what love is, and to meet the cruel fate that awaits her:

One single night of ecstasy was hers. Yonder is the château, against which, in clear moonlight, her lover sees her. Her unbound tresses sweeping the old walls' surface Pelléas thought was a "sunbeam," so golden was their color.

"Penche-toi, penche-toi, que je voie tes cheveux dénoués," cries her lover.

And woman-like, moved by this mysterious soul of woman that seems to typify the soul—the errant, wilful, mysterious breath of life that stirs the souls of all women—Mélisande obeys. She leans farther and farther out, till the golden rain of her hair inundates her lover. As he grasps the glorious tresses they seem to him alive. "They quiver, they palpitate in my hands like golden birds." And the still night heard the burning kisses "along the thousand golden links" fall like another rain.

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Until one wanders among these wind-shaped trees, until one has felt the witchery of the melancholy that pervades St.-Wandrille, one cannot realize how to a poet, to a playwright, the whole place spoke with tongues of inspiration. Maeterlinck translated the spirit that dwells in certain isolated, remote corners of the world. St.-Wandrille is the very incubator of mysticism. Never did a mystic find so perfect a frame in which to place for us the portrait of the mysterious. The *mise-en-scène* was set here, centuries ago. The château, the still forest, the very pool, the abandoned fountain "that opens the eyes of the blind," are all here. The scene was awaiting only the genius who could animate it with living souls.

Maeterlinck, the conjurer, is no longer here. He has followed his own *Blue Bird*. The fresh happiness that has come to him would not build its nest in such drear surroundings. The haunting memories of other days, perhaps, more poignant than those of love and of lovers one builds on a page, would have been "sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh."

Representations of both "Macbeth" and "Pelléas and Mélisande" were given in the romantic setting of the abbaye cloisters, its vaulted galleries, its melancholy park and château, during the long lease of the property held by Maeterlinck. The picturesque setting and staging of the two great plays were inspired by the talent of Mme. Georgette Leblanc, the rôles of Lady Macbeth and Mélisande being interpreted by her.

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IV

I remembered to have heard the "witchery" of the spectacle of "Macbeth," as played at night at St.-Wandrille, extolled one winter's night in a great French château—one of Sully's châteaux—the one in which the famous minister died. The wind was howling as wind howls in La Beauce; the flaming logs before us, that made our faces burn and yet could not warm our backs, so vast was the huge *salon* in which we sat, forced us to bend over the yawning fireplace. These logs would blaze up every now and then, as a fiercer blast than common swept down the chimney and swirled about the massive walls, as though in hot anger at finding such great towers and walls in their path.

The owner of this magnificence was a slender, sensitive-faced youth of twenty-two. He was the child of the two centuries—of the latter end of the nineteenth that gave him birth and of the beginning of the twentieth that had formed him. He had the delicate shiver of responsive intensity to the masters that ruled then in French art and letters. He believed in the art of Huysmans and Maeterlinck; in music, Debussy was his god. It was because of Maeterlinck he had gone to hear Georgette Leblanc "do" Lady Macbeth at the famous abbaye.

He had forgotten, as he described the play, how cold "all the back of me is"; he was so intent in delivering his impressions of the curious, "the interesting yet strangely disappointing spectacle,"

UP THE SEINE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

that he would rise every now and then, would give an imitative gesture, would illustrate, with singular eloquence, the effects produced by certain situations and dialogues in Shakespeare's masterpiece.

"You cannot imagine how it gained, yet how much of the beauty was lost, by seeing it not staged but set—set now in the cloisters, now in the open, under the great trees, with trembling lights touching now robes, now her pale face, now a bit of sculpture—a nymph, a satyr, or a beautiful bit of Gothic carving, lighted up, pallid figures, raised from the dead of the night, only to die away into gloom, into nothingness."

Half the night was spent, I remember, in listening to the impressions which this unforgettable representation of the famous masterpiece had made on de Pontois's sensitive, poetic mind. So vivid was his rendering, so artistic his presentment of the scenic surroundings, so quick had he been to seize the more illusive, suggestive notes of the great play, I was more than ever convinced that here was indeed another young and gifted artist in the making.

In going forth from the abbaye, along the road that beckoned, leading us up among sloping fields, shaded groves, and hills riding away to the blue seas of the skies—in following the road my mind was full of that dear boy, of his charm, of his gifts, and of his death. He gave his young life to his country. Not in "Flanders field," but in Alsace, at Thann, he lies. The charming talent that might have followed Maeterlinck's search for the illusive, the mys-

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terious, in this world of shadows was offered up as his sacrifice on the altar of France, that her genius might pass on, as a lighted torch, to other unborn generations.



The romantic story of the Marquis of Stackpool, one that years ago all England talked about over the teacups, is one inseparably linked with the beauties and the ruins of the abbaye.

Charmed by the melancholy and the pathetic abandonment of St.-Wandrille, the marquis bought the grounds and buildings. Lover of architecture, dreamer, enthusiast, the English nobleman devoted his talents, his time, and his fortune to the restoration of the great pile. The Beaux-Arts and French connoisseurs will tell you he had better have left the ruins as they were, since in several of the attempted restorations architectural crimes were committed. Mistaken as were some of these laudable efforts, at least for several years the joys that are the recompense of the restorer were the reward of the intrepid and generous-minded marquis.

St.-Wandrille seems to carry, along with its charm, the mystery of fatality. With its owners, all, for a time, appears to go well. Then the Sisters Three, having decided on the ultimate fate of a victim, proceed to take their toll of human happiness.

When the Marquis of Stackpool lost his wife he made of her room, of the château and abbaye, indeed, her living sepulcher. The apartments she had graced

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with her gentle presence were left as she had lived in them. In the cloisters, under the great trees, in the park where for years plans had been eagerly discussed together, columns and walls the husband and wife had seen rise into strength and beauty, through their joint taste and unflagging zeal, each step echoing along the vaulted cloisters, every lonely walk beneath the arching trees, each and every stone that had been their joint labor of love—such memories were the haunting ghosts that finally drove the marquis to make the supreme sacrifice. He made his vows to the Benedictine Order.

The greatest of all his restorations was in the gift he made to his Order of the abbaye itself. With the separation of the church and state the abbaye was sold, and the present owner, who leased it to M. Maeterlinck, purchased the property.

CHAPTER XV

AN OPEN-AIR LUNCHEON

IT was good to be out again under heaven's great vault. The day, if anything, was grown more lovely. The sun was high and warm. There were no ghosts under the trees we had chosen for the leafy aisles of our *al fresco* luncheon. It was a sheltered sanctuary, but there was gold in plenty rained down on us through the thick oak branches. Once more we were in the sunny, grassy, gaily lighted world, where there were no more mysterious shapes about than ants, uninvited guests to our banquets, and curious bees, wondering if hot coffee from the thermos, or cold chicken and salad, would be a satisfactory substitute for hidden sweets in scented flowers.

The Haut Sauterne had just been uncorked when clanking steps on the road—steps that came down with a military rhythm—made us lift our eyes. The men swinging along the highroad brought us back to our own time and to the history of our own day with a start. Four youths in the hideous cutaway caps which give to every German soldier the look of an escaped convict, and their green coats with the

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huge "P" painted on the dingy fabric, left us in no doubt as to the nationality of the group. These German prisoners were followed, at a leisurely pace, by a tall, well-knit, bright-eyed French sergeant, spick and span in his new horizon-blues.

"Bonjour, Mesdames," he cried, as he gave us his gallant salute, "et bon appétit."

The bright eyes were fixed with unmistakable envy on our lifted glasses.

Under such a glance, to extend the hospitality of the arching trees and to proffer a brimming glass were surely but the most elementary courtesies.

It was an illuminating example of the force that lies in victory to witness how easily our handsome young sergeant managed to partake of an exceedingly hearty luncheon and yet keep an eye on his men. With a slight gesture, to us unintelligible, the Frenchman had signified to the prisoners that they were to sit down. They plumped down on a mound of grass with machine-like celerity. They huddled close together. Every one of the eight eyes watched us through staring eyes—eyes, however fixed the stare, that never once would meet ours.

The young sergeant stood straight and tall for a Frenchman; with his gun slung across his back, glass in hand, he was not only entirely at his ease, but he was openly enjoying this unlooked-for break in the long day's march. He and his Boches, he explained, had come from the country about Yvetot. The prisoners had been working on the farms, and were going to others nearer Havre. It was dull

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work, this "rounding up" of Germans. Oh-h, they were docile enough; they gave no trouble—but if one was alone, as he was, "it was as well to keep a sharp lookout." He always walked behind them—"comme ça on est sûr."

As he talked, and first sipped his wine, and then finished the glass, at a single draught, the Frenchman's childlike delight in an audience became more and more apparent. To have the stage to oneself, to be able to give valuable information, and to be addressing *deux dames américaines*, who, doubtless, needed a great many things explained to them, was a situation not offered *un beau gars* every day in the week. To be dramatic is every Frenchman's second nature. A recital of an adventure he had had in the earlier years of the war, of a really tragic nature, was given, after a few courteous phrases, with the expressive, illustrative gesture, with the fire of gleaming eyes, and the rising inflections that impart to even a simple narrative dramatic intensity.

He had been telling us he also had but lately come from Ribécourt. We had asked from what part of France he came, and he had answered, "from Senlis." We said we had but just returned from that part of the devastated regions.

"Then, Mesdames, if you saw all these villages between Senlis, Compiègne, Roye, and Montdidier, you saw some terrible sights. But what one sees now, horrible as it is, is nothing to what went on when the Germans were in possession.

"Tenez! here is what happened just about some

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of the villages you passed. I was there after the Germans had gone.

"Not for twenty miles about was a single village spared—only one. All were burned, pillaged first, sacked, then—ppsst! flammenwerfer! All in flames—all of them, save that one!"

The sergeant was waiting for our query. His instinct told him it would come. We played up to his expectancy.

"But—why—why was one spared and all the others—"

"Ah! because, Madame, the Boches knew which one to spare. They had their reasons. They wanted information. They must have it. So they picked out a village where they saw the women were sillier, more foolish, vainer than elsewhere. They first took away all the men—those too old to be soldiers. Then they played their little game. They began to have orgies—oh, orgies that lasted days and nights. And then the women, crazy from fright and drink, told them all they wanted to hear. They even sold their men."

We chorused an indignant protest. "Surely no Frenchwoman would do that!"

"I don't say no. Only—Madame has never seen a German drunk. Then she cannot know what it is to be in the power of a beast unchained—when he is the master in a country. These brutes threatened to cripple their children, before their eyes, if the women didn't obey them—in everything. And Madame knows what they meant by that." The

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soldier stopped. He had lost all his swagger. His easy assurance deserted him. He changed the topic almost immediately to one less gruesome. With his quick insight he perceived that our sun of content, our gay little hour, was darkened. We could eat, we could laugh no more. Quick to seize the atmospheric change, our guest continued to speak of trivial things. He even, in an excess of amiable comradeship, helped us to repack our luncheon-basket. He saw he had unwittingly evoked emotions he could only dimly divine, but he knew that in attempting, innocently, to add a certain *caviar* to our feast he had, in some mistaken way, mixed, instead, a corrosive element.

The Germans, who had never ceased to watch—slyly, warily—every gesture, each motion of each one of us, obviously concluded their watchful waiting had come to an end. Seeing the chauffeur leap into his seat, after lifting the luncheon-basket to the baggage rail, one after another the prisoners rose up, stretching arms and legs.

“Asseyez-vous—sit down! How dare you rise before I gave the order!” Our sergeant was transformed. His order had been given in a voice of rolling thunder; every syllable had been punctuated with oaths in which “dog” and “god” and uncomplimentary remarks about the maternal givers of life to the men were only more loudly shouted than was the command itself.

One thing I noticed—the Frenchman never touched his gun. It swung still along his broad

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back. As he made us his parting salute the weapon was only then grasped, lightly, in his right hand. With a spring, the lithe figure dashed across a grassy mound; the sergeant gave a muttered "*Debout—marche!*" and the Germans struck their military stride and marched down the dusty road.

CHAPTER XVI

LE TRAIT—A GREAT ENTERPRISE

THE quickening of our excited talk, the arguments tossed to and fro, the rapid glancing at stupendous questions it will take centuries to answer—this effervescence of two minds—of two who had lived in France through all the horrors of the war, from its very beginning—had made us unconscious of all else. That we were leaving St.-Wandrille; that we were traversing the same poetic road that we had taken in the earlier morning; that now we were being whirled into another part of this varied, this amazingly picturesque Pays de Caux—to this quick change of scene we had been as indifferent as though we had passed along the countryside in a trance.

We came to fully restored consciousness with a start. How best to cure a world in the throes of anarchy, suffering from the disease of mortal exhaustion and apathy, when it was not writhing in the agonies of convulsive unrest and discontent, were questions left in the air, so to speak. We were actually confronting one solution of our agitated planet's distemper.

Our car's speed had brought us, in an incredibly short half-hour, to Le Trait.

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It was at Le Trait we returned from the vain and vague regions of argument to a new world, to one in the very making. We were confronting one of the most interesting, most intelligently planned schemes for the amelioration of labor. We were in the midst of what appeared to be a model village.

On either side of the road leading to Jumièges—the famous abbaye—on this highroad there were houses and shops, long buildings that had the appearance of future factories, with paths and lanes whose unsmoothed roughnesses announced their recent laying out. Workmen were hammering deafening blows; whistles were sounding; telegraph poles, telephone wires were being placed; and serious-faced men were walking about, now stopping to consult on some debatable topic, now entering the near houses, or emerging again to give fresh orders to engineers or architects.

It was in the houses, in their new, original planning—in the building of the houses, I found my chief interest centered. The bright red tiles of the roofs were advanced on either side of each house to form long extensions. The houses themselves were, in character, a cross between a bungalow and a modest French farm. Their aspect was more than pleasing; it was attractive. That the working-people already installed in those model dwellings considered their homes worthy of the best, in point of decorative adjuncts, was proved in the windows' lace curtains being daintily tied with colored ribbons.

About several of the houses gardens of flowers

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and vegetables were already not only planted, but the geraniums, phlox, marguerites, and dahlias were in full bloom, and salads, peas, beans, and turnips were ripe.

Long since we had left the car, for I had special and peculiar reasons for my own interest in this capitalistic experiment. I had listened to the story of its inception and development and under circumstances and in a situation not easily forgotten.

In the month of early April, 1918, the nights in Paris were nights when one spent more hours in a cellar than in one's bed. The enemy aviators were unceasingly busy. Their accuracy of aim gave one the hardened cuirass, in time, of a somewhat fatalistic indifference. The cellar of a certain apartment-house where I was hospitably given a chance for such semi-security—this cellar having a graveyard climate of mingled mildew and penetrating dampness—my hostess and I descended each night, at any hour the siren warned us the Boches were about to deluge Paris with bombs—we descended to the apartment of two kind friends, *au premier*. The highly intelligent and remarkably sagacious head of the house had discovered a certain corridor in his apartment which promised to be as "secure a place as any other." We were most generously offered to share the security of the walled-in corridor; for it was the double walls of the latter which promised a certain safety if "the house itself was struck and pierced from roof to cellar by an incendiary torpedo." As there were two exits from

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this narrow, inclosed gallery—for such it was—there were two chances of escape did any projectile chance to find its destructive path along our chosen retreat.

Long hours were spent in that corridor—sometimes the larger part of a night. The hours, however, never seemed long, for gathered together there were the rare and delightful elements which, as social elements, the world mourns as having disappeared with the eighteenth century.

There was an English beauty, who invariably issued from her room in an attire peculiarly suited to her extraordinarily piquant style; she would catch up her warm otter fur coat, long and full, wrap it about her, incase her feet, white as the Pentelican marble feet of an antique statue, in old-gold slippers, and, as a finish to the simplicity of her costume, her fluffy brown-robed Pomeranian dog was tucked under one arm. With the tossed-together luxuriance of her blond tresses—the high light of the picture—she was a Whistlerian symphony in browns and pale corn-color.

There was also Monsieur—her husband, in a rich, sober-toned, silk dressing-gown, looking as wide-awake and as wise as Solon, ready for discussion on any subject, any one of which his brilliant intellect would illuminate with new, original lights, flashed in few but eloquent phrases. There was my hostess, in her laces and dainty tea-gown, responsive and as mentally alert at three in the morning as she would be at three in the later afternoon. With beauty and

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talent, and with courage as Spartan as it was unconscious, who can wonder the hours flew? "*Le seul salon où l'on cause c'est le salon sous terre,*" said some witty Frenchman. It is certain there was a renewal, a development of the graces and the arts of conversation, under the flashing fire of the German bombs, that rivaled the best of talk embalmed for us in the pages of any one of the eighteenth-century French or English memoirs.

It was while the ominous crash of near descending bombs were startling the ear that I first heard of the Worms project.

Monsieur X—— was one of the partners of this great shipping firm, at Havre. Their own losses had been great. Their patriotism and business foresight and enterprise were but quickened by the disaster that was befalling French ships. The great project born of these losses and of the vision of France's maritime needs after the war are best told in Monsieur X——'s own words:

"The conception of these shipbuilding yards came to Messrs. Worms & Co. in 1917—that is, at the worst period of the war. Their intention was not to build the yards for 'war purposes,' but to enable France to increase, after the war, their building capacity, which was all the more necessary as the world's commercial fleet was then rapidly decreasing. In those days America had not yet started to build on a large scale.

"As those yards were meant to be a 'peace' establishment, Messrs. Worms & Co. decided that

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they should be laid down, not next to a large town, with all its dangers and temptations, but in the middle of a healthful country, far away from any town; and they have accordingly chosen the best site they could find, along the deepest part of the Seine, in beautiful scenery, at Le Trait, which is situated some eighteen miles from Rouen and some forty miles from Havre. The small towns of Caudebec, on the one side, and Duclair, on the other, are four and a half miles away. The yards are on the edge of the forest of Le Trait.

"There was, however, a drawback to such a situation—that is, the workmen not being able to find lodgings in town, a whole garden city had to be built for them next to the yards.

"So, in addition to the shipbuilding yards themselves, which provide for eight berths, in which steamers of any size up to eighteen thousand tons can be built; in addition, also, to all the workshops necessary to feed those eight berths—there are, among others, two large halls of six hundred feet each and one hundred and twenty feet wide—in addition to the most modern machinery equipment which is being fitted in those yards, Messrs. Worms & Co. are erecting a garden city for the thirty-five hundred workmen who will be employed—which means that, when completed, in the course of a very few months, this garden city will have a population of twelve thousand souls.

"Every house was to be fitted with running water, gas, and electricity; every family was to

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have a little piece of garden around their house, to grow their flowers and vegetables. Every possible comfort will be assured the workmen; also entertainments, a cinema-hall, sporting grounds, etc., having been provided for. There were, of course, to be a church, a hospital, and schools for children.

"Although the building of this enormous undertaking has been slow, owing to the difficulties experienced during the war, and even after, the yards are now practically completed. The building of the boats will be started in a few weeks' time, and the necessary houses have already been erected for several hundreds of workmen."

In a later conversation Monsieur X—— answered a protest I had made in commenting on the desecration of the superb forests of the Seine.

"You must resign yourself to see more and more of such desecrations, dear Madam. The cuttings you deplore, as impairing the natural beauties of the river, were concessions made, during the war, to our allies—to the English, to the Belgians. They as well as we had need of wood for barracks, for the trenches. The war has really seen this new mine of wealth opened to France; we did not before realize what a great watery highway was our Seine—nor what ports could be made along her shores. In ten, in fifteen years you will see the shores covered with just such industrial enterprises as ours. You cry out? Ah! You look upon the Seine from the point of view of the artist. You wish its architectural treasures to remain in their frames

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—in among the natural beauties. We look at the river from the point of view of utility.”

Are we to deplore this, the future of the great river?

Every model house we passed, as we left the garden city, seemed to give us its answer.

Here, in this ideal situation, was the promise of an ideal life for the working-man, of his secure future and of that of his children. *Le Trait* was the enlightened, progressive realization of capitalistic responsibility.

From the point of view of pure patriotism, can a more eloquent proof be given of French courage, of French assurance of ultimate victory? “In the darkest days of the war” to have conceived such a great enterprise and to have started the yards are in themselves the answer to every doubting mind. France’s powers of initiative, of recuperative strength, are indeed inexhaustible.

CHAPTER XVII

JUMIÈGES

I

THE leap backward from a twentieth-century shipbuilding yard and an ideal garden city to an eleventh-century abbaye might have been a somewhat perilous mental effort. We were, however, as one might say, in training.

As the towering mass of the great Jumièges ruins rose up above the long convent walls, the point of view was quickly adjusted. There was, perhaps, an even more instantaneous response to their grandeur; these Jumièges ruins, in their long reign of twelve centuries, have more than contributed their part to the glories of France.

On entering the beautiful park, the uprising mass of the western front of the abbaye confronts one. The portal, the two superb towers, almost persuade one that the abbaye itself will be found as intact as are the towers.

The impression produced at the very first approach to these Jumièges ruins is one of an immense surprise. How is it all the world does not talk of them, visit them, extol them as other lesser great architectural remains are lauded?

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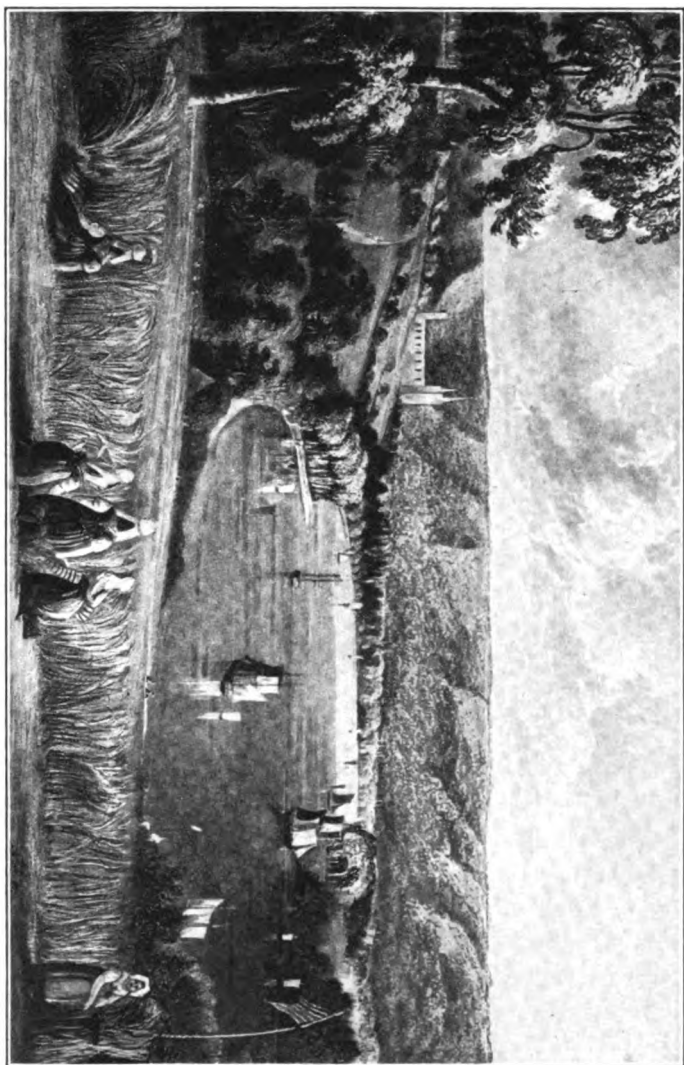
The scenic surroundings in themselves would lend poetic charm, as well as a certain grandeur, to even less noble an architectural survival. The great trees of the park, the orderliness, the quiet beauty of the surrounding spaces, contribute to give a fitting frame to these ecclesiastical buildings, that are among the most remarkable in France.

The building of the churches, gardens, abbatial palaces, guard-rooms, and libraries of Jumièges has followed the rise of French power and ecclesiastical domination; with the ebb and flow of France's own historic vicissitudes they have been sacked, pillaged, and destroyed, only to rise, phoenix-like, from their ruins.

The abbots who planned the superb Norman abbaye, whose towers and many of whose walls are still standing, must have believed they were building for an earthly eternity of time. The earlier abbaye erected by St.-Philbert was built on the ruins of an ancient Roman *castrum*.

Two centuries later the fame of the beauty and, above all other attractions, the riches of this original monastery became the chosen scene of Norman horrors. Hastings, the Dane, at the head of an army of pirates and murderers, attacked the Byzantine-Romanesque church, robbed it, pillaged the monastery, and massacred all but two of its holy men.

There is a touching and a somewhat romantic story relating to the reappearance of these two surviving brethren. They stole back, it appears, to the ruins of their beloved church years after. On a certain



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moonlight night William Long-Swords, having come on a hunting expedition to the famed forest of Jumièges, on visiting the ruins of the convent found these two desolate Benedictines weeping over their irreparable losses. This particular son of Rollo—the latter the great and the first Norman chieftain to own Normandy (Neustria)—had a kind heart as well as a lively memory. Rescued from a terrible fate, during a chase that might have proved fatal, in a neighboring forest, William vowed not only to rebuild Jumièges, but also to enter holy orders. One of these pious vows was fulfilled. The church of St.-Peter was rebuilt. After William's assassination the monkish habit he proposed to don was found among his effects.

With this rebuilding of its central church we follow the fortunes of the abbaye step by step, by literally reading its story through the architectural fragments that still confront us.

The original church was Gallo-Roman, remains having been found of this the earliest of all the abbayes. The church built after the first Danish invasion was Byzantine-Romanesque.

Against the wall of the church of St.-Pierre—the Gothic church adjoining the abbaye—there are some exceedingly interesting panels still remaining, wherein were inlaid, originally, Byzantine mosaics. There are also arches curiously wrought, to the left of this elevation—arches recalling in their grouping and tracery the capitals of certain Auvergnois cloisters.

It would be well for the visitor to begin his tour

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of inspection at this point, as then the gradual advancement in the Romanesque, the Norman, the Gothic, and the Flamboyant styles, in all of which Jumièges is so rich, could be traced.

The great abbaye itself, begun in 1040, was built in three distinct parts: the narthex, the towers and the massive towers were first erected; the connecting nave was built later on.

The superb central arches supporting the lantern—one of which is still intact—these arches are the ever-continuing wonder of architects. The audacity of the conception and the triumphant success of the perilous venture of carrying the Norman arch to such a height class this achievement among the rarest architectural jewels in France.

The elaborate Gothic apsidal chapels were added under English domination. The delicacy of the carving, the refinement in the stone traceries, are eloquent of the taste displayed in perfecting every detail in these ornamental additions to the main building. The singular nobility and unusual dignity of the older Norman abbaye is perhaps made the more pronounced seen thus in contrast with the lighter, more purely decorative Gothic. The "massive rudeness" which commonly characterizes the majority of Norman cathedrals or the more important Norman churches is strikingly absent, as a distinctive feature, in this Jumièges abbaye. There are such breadth, elevation, and simplicity, as well as such grandeur, in the fragments left us, we cannot conceive of the church as it was as otherwise

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than the most perfect of all Norman ecclesiastical structures.

A great ruin has the one supreme advantage of allowing imagination to take its flight. When a Norman church has the tender blues of an August sky for a roof, and living trees and vivid grasses for traceries along arches and columns, where can one find Ferguson's "massive Norman rudeness"?

As one now walks beneath the roofs of sky, beneath a side-wall here, a fragment of a nave there, with a head staring out at one beneath a capital, on whose nose, perhaps, a swallow alights—fragmentary as is this labyrinth of antique structures, it yet preserves an astonishing air of solidity. It seems impossible to associate with the majestic pile the idea of decay or of sadness. There is something of the same exhilarating atmosphere pervading these great ruins such as one experiences in standing on the Athenian Acropolis.

The great life lived here seems to have communicated something of its vibratory power to the very air. Those dynamic forces of passions and beliefs that stir the world no longer appear to have humanized the very stones. One might well believe one heard voices still commanding, exhorting, comforting, preaching, and praying, and others raised in solemn chant of praise in that superb male chorus that rose up under the towering arches for twelve long centuries.

There is indeed scarcely a stone left standing that does not bristle with suggestions.

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In the ensuing centuries Jumièges contained within its vast walls many of the fields of human industry which in our later centuries have been specialized.

It was at once a great school, renowned for its advanced scholarship and its scientific attainments and teachings; it was also a food committee, a master of forestry, and an administrator of towns, of villages, and of wide stretches of country.

These abbots and their monks "administered, governed, preached, consoled, fortified the people, created customers, taught children, fed the poor, educated clerics, sustained the liturgy, spread abroad hope and peace." Their college won a great name indeed for learning; charities on an immense scale passed through the hands of these Benedictine distributors.

It is only in attempting to grasp the magnitude of such labors and the lofty ideals animating these Jumièges monks that the importance and radiating influence of their twelve centuries of continuous effort can be divined. Once the grandeur of the life lived under these noble arches is seized and pictured, the splendors of the ruins themselves are illumined by that idealizing vision which helps one to rebuild them.

The scenario of the great historic situations associated with Jumièges was, one must concede, magnificently set.

The greatest of all the scenes, since it was one that changed the face of the world, was played out

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between Edward the Confessor and William, Duke of Normandy; and later the same setting was furnished for the vows Harold the English king was to mouth before the stern Norman.

That "halo of tenderness" which Green, the historian, states was to surround the very name of Edward the Confessor was possibly a halo borrowed from the gentle yet learned Jumièges monks. The English king, as boy and man, had lived as a student and exile at Jumièges. There it was he made his promise to his kinsman, William, Duke of Normandy; the crown of England was to pass after his death to the strong hands of his Norman cousin.

Dim as are the lights that play upon that momentous scene, Norman historians have preserved for us, through their vivid character-drawing, the outlines and features of the two rulers. We can still picture the strongly built, powerful frame of William, his Danish heritage of strength and untamable vigor blazing through his blue eyes and resolute features. He who from his earliest boyhood had proved himself warrior, a great leader and winner of men, a true king and ruler, must have felt the winy rapture flood his whole being at hearing the vow lisped by his English cousin. He, the "Bastard" King of England! On royal robes no stains of birth are seen.

Opposite this controlled, indomitable, superb figure stood "the gentle king"—he who, on taking up the English scepter on his return from exile, seemed "a mere shadow of the past." "There was

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something shadow-like in his thin form, his delicate complexion, his transparent womanly hands.”¹

Like shadows now are the aureoled confessor, the mighty Norman ruler, Harold, who was to swear, later on, Edward’s oath once again—this time on Jumièges’s sacred relics, as are all the attendant host of monks, of abbots, of Norman knights, and of English earls, who were doubtless present when Edward and Harold gave their kingly word—the promise that was to shape the fate of unborn millions—like shadows, indeed, those phantom forms melt into the mists of the past. How far away, how remote from our own lives, seem such men and their words—we who have known a living William II of Germany and have seen monarchies and kingdoms crumble like a handful of dust!

Yet the shadow cast by that scene, under these Jumièges arches, still stretches from British London to Melbourne, from Delhi to Montreal, as its persistent influence has crossed with the English armies the lilled fields of France, making its blood-soaked soil to blossom forth in renewed energy, to help win the great Victory—to remake the world.

The great bells of the abbaye that had played their chiming music in that far-away eleventh century tolled with as clamorous a ring when Charles VII came to Jumièges. This king, who was *le gentil roi* to the two women who chiefly loved him—to Joan of Arc who loved him reverently as her king, and the other one who loved him as women love royal

¹ Green, *History of the English People*.

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lovers, or, rather, as they did in the days when kings were such kings that to yield to their passion was considered rather an honorable weakness than a disgraceful action—this king of France came in the year 1449 to the abbaye partly to see to the enlargement of certain apartments in the superb palace reserved for royal visitors.

Such an errand was a serious matter. Lover of ease and luxury, dreaming of peace with wars thundering at half the towns in France not yet his, the king had come to Jumièges to plan new splendors, it is true, and also to make love to Agnès Sorel.

Agnès was close at hand. There was to be no element lacking in the king's entertainment.

One wonders if the king's memories were all sweet as he rode along the Seine shores; if the river in its steely, wintry shining held up to him no mirror reflecting the burden, light as had been kingly gratitude, that the waters running to the sea had carried, on a certain spring May day in the year 1431. Did the chasing waves tell him no story of how a French king had deserted the girl—the saint who had saved him—whose courage and pious belief in him as God's anointed had saved France?—had crowned him, Charles, king at Rheims, as she had promised? "Gentle Dauphin . . . the Heavenly King sends me to tell you you shall be anointed and crowned at Rheims!" she had cried, as she knelt at his feet.¹

Here now was Charles, crowned and anointed,

¹ Lea, *Histoire de l'Inquisition*, translated by Saloman Reinach.

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riding to meet his mistress. How could he be expected to feel the prick of conscience or to allow dismal memories of a hateful past to rise up to spoil his present glow of happy content? Eighteen years ago a peasant girl called Joan of Arc was burned at the stake, and her ashes were flung into the Seine. A king could afford to forget. There were many who affirmed she was a witch. The French bishops, the English judges, and the inquisitors believed her to be one. And it was the English and the Inquisition that had condemned her. The king whom Joan had crowned could therefore shrug his shoulders and ride on, smiling as he thought of the face of all faces for him, looking forth even now from a manor window. The God that watches over kings works in wondrous ways. Joan, the girl peasant, was God's humble messenger to rouse France and Frenchmen. All was now well with the world—or would be, once France was entirely freed from English pretenders. The reasoning of kings is not that of ordinary men.

When Charles reached Jumièges, not a mile away, in the charming Manoir du Mesnil, close to the Seine shores, *la belle des belles* was awaiting her royal lover. From her manor, it is recorded, through its windows, or, as she wandered out upon the roads leading to Jumièges or along the river shores, Agnès would look and look "to see if she could see something coming." How like a woman! It is always the woman who watches and waits.

At this period of her life this lovely woman, for whom even the harshest historian has only soft

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words, was no longer in the first bloom of her radiant youth; she was nearing forty. At twenty-two, such was the fame of her beauty, *les plus grands seigneurs la courtoisaient*, though she possessed neither fortune nor a great name.

When the greatest of all French grandees paid her his court Agnès won even the queen's respect by the dignity of her answer: "Simple demoiselle though I am, the king's conquest will not be an easy one, for him. I venerate and honor him, but I do not consider I have anything to share, in such honors, with the queen."

Agnès reconsidered that decision, as all the world knows. Such was her charm, such her wise counsels, such the mingled gaiety and wisdom of her mind and character, that she kept a sensuous-natured king true to her till she died.

Never, it appears, was Agnès as tender, as beautiful, as during this her last great moment of happiness. It almost seemed, we are told, as if she divined her coming end. "Her wit, her charming grace, all those delicate ways she had learned at the court of Isabeau of Lorraine, Duchess of Anjou," were the thousand magics by which she charmed, not only the king, but abbot, canons, and deans whose vows of continence did not forbid their homage to a king who had broken his nor their openly expressed delight and admiration for an unrepentant Magdalene.

Certain French historians would have us believe that Agnès's memory pervades every part of the

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great abbaye. The fact of the king's last meeting with his love in the superb setting of Jumièges, this tender episode in the history of the abbaye, has cast, it is true, that spell of romance about the famous monastery which illicit amours, framed in sumptuous surroundings, are certain to evoke. That this meeting of the lovers was known and practically countenanced by a whole convent of monks adds a piquant note to the event.

Jumièges in this fifteenth century was at the very zenith of its splendor. Having escaped the pillaging and devastating outrages only too common during the English occupation of all this part of Normandy, the abbaye was, one may say, actually gorged with its riches. The king and his suite, as Francis I found in the following century, as Marguerite d'Anjou, wife of Henry VI, and as so many other royal and crowned heads were to find—King Charles, as he well knew, would be royally lodged; there were apartments, galleries, guard-rooms ready and waiting for princely guests and their attendant courtiers and guards.

On so vast a scale was this splendor of the great abbayes of the period planned and administered that the monastic life of the brethren, their devotions, their vast business relations, their charities, their administrative labors, could be carried on, uninterrupted and in complete seclusion, while literally hundreds of guests were housed, in sumptuous luxury, and fed at banquets such as Mæcenas himself might have ordered.

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Norman pomp, Norman pride, Norman power were shrined in the now completed splendor of the abbaye.

From the upper galleries of the ambulatories Agnès, as she and her ladies came to the celebration of high mass, would have leaned downward to watch the magnificent ceremonial, she would have seen the abbot wearing the jeweled miter, carrying the episcopal staff, and on his finger there shone the violet glow of the bishop's ring belonging, according to canonical rule, strictly to bishops; but Gregory XII had bestowed these rights on a former abbot of Jumièges in recognition of his great services.

Agnès would have slipped her white fingers along her rosary, as she knelt, but her eyes would have caught the gleam of the morning sun illuminating the frescoed saints and angels and its softened wintry glow on painted walls and carved capitals.

Through the stained-glass windows, framed in the Gothic apsidal chapels, the prismatic hues of a thousand polychrome colors would make the choir end of the great church a blaze of glory. The sonorous Gregorian chant would rise, would soar in rhythmic volume like undulating waves made musical. In the processional, the stepping of hundreds of the black-habited Benedictine monks would be the rude accompaniment to the choir-boys' fluted tenors. The statues of the cowed monks and saints, limbed by sculptors, rigid in their marble stillness, niched in their shrines, would seem almost as animate as the living army passing before them as were these

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men who were vowed to celibacy, vowed to unquestioning obedience, vowed to renounce perpetually all that Charles and Agnès were blazoning before their eyes.

II

In the admirably arranged little museum, just opposite the abbaye, you will be shown a certain slab of black marble; this was the covering stone to the sarcophagus in which was laid forever at rest that heart that had beaten to every note of love's rapture. Agnès Sorel had wished *son cœur et ses entrailles* to be entombed at Jumièges.

The idyl at Jumièges did not have a prolonged life. The king arrived in November in 1449. Toward the end of December he remembered he had a kingdom not as yet all his own; he departed on a warlike expedition. Joan of Arc, having shown him how to impress troops by appearing in person before a besieged town, the king reappeared in January, having forced Harfleur, held by the English, to capitulate. We can almost hear the bells ringing to celebrate the triumphant feat. Calais, it is true, was still an English town; Honfleur was enduring a siege of thirty-nine days; Paris was French once more; but in this war of mutual extermination it was rather famine, poverty, ruin who were kings than luxury-loving, love-making Charles; a hundred thousand men, women, and children had perished in Paris alone from misery and want.

Charles was forced to confront one monarch at

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Jumièges more powerful than Henri V, or the Duke of Bedford, or Talbot. King Death rode out of his mystic realms and marked Agnès as one to enter into another life, through other portals than palace doors.

In her death Agnès was as mourned as she had been courted in life. All Jumièges, all the court surrounding the deserted queen, the queen herself mourned "the one who was beautiful above all other beauties." She died in the odor of sanctity, on the 9th of February, 1449. *Elle eut moult belle contrition et repentance de ses péchés . . . et invoquait Dieu et la Sainte-Marie à son ayde.* Such death-bed repentance appears to me to be passably easy, after one has lived for over eighteen years the happiest of earthly lives, unflecked, apparently, by a passing shadow of contrition.

In the same room as the slab of Agnès's sarcophagus, in the museum, you will be shown another curious, and far more primitive, tomb—the tomb of "*Les Enervés.*" The legend—for the story bears all the marks of legendary development—is the supposed history of the two sons of Clovis II and his Queen Bathilde—the very queen who founded the abbaye.

These two sons, having revolted against their queen-mother during the king's absence, suffered horrible and quite incredible punishment at their father's hands. The two rebellious sons were hamstrung, and their bodies were flung to the mercy of the Seine. Discovered and rescued by the Jumièges

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monks, they died in the monastery, and were piously buried in the original church.

III

Jumièges for a long century was to enjoy its era of power. With the wars of religion, however, the Calvinists were to precede the Terrorists, in their fury of demolition, sacrilege, and pillaging. The monks fled, perhaps through that very subterranean passage which the Jumièges guide will even now show you. Such passages were built originally for quick and safe exit not only for the brethren inhabiting monasteries, but for the surrounding population who sought safety from Norman pirates, later from English armies, in the ensuing centuries from Protestant pillagers, and later still from the Terrorists.

Jumièges from its earliest beginning had been a refuge, in critical times, for the neighboring villagers. Kings did not disdain to gain towns and cities thus through its secret underground passages, to towns and cities where they might court safety.

These long, well-built, all-but-airless galleries resemble the better-built trenches of our late war. Through these dark, underground passageways every cloistered inhabitant of Jumièges could flee during the wars of religion as far as Rouen. With them the monks were careful, knowing the Calvinists' hatred of sacred relics and their love of gold, to carry with them the bones of saints, all the

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magnificent gold altar service, and all of their treasure it was possible to transport.

A single elderly monk and a convert were the only occupants of the vast monastery to answer the angry, cheated Protestants, whose faces must have reflected other passions than those preached by Calvin and Luther, when they made their raid on the monastery.

In the later Renaissance period the great abbaye recovered its lost splendor. We read that the beautiful gardens, which you may still see, were laid out as doubtless we now behold them; for the present owner of Jumièges has continued her talented husband's works in restoring at least the lovely gardens to something of their former beauty.

The fine library of ten thousand volumes was still on the shelves, in 1789, when Jumièges, under revolutionary rule, was suppressed as a monastery. The monks were succeeded by a regiment of cavalry. The sacred vessels, all the heaped-up treasures of gold and silver—that gold that had comforted how many an impoverished soul, that had ransomed its own duke, Richard I, King of England, that had enabled eighty-two abbots to dispense charity as plentifully as the golden wheat yielded up its wealth in the abbaye fields—relics, vessels, gold, all were taken over and transferred to the Public Treasury.

During the Terror Jumièges suffered the last desecration. It was sold to a Rouen citizen in 1796. The magnificent structures eventually became a quarry. After all the lead, iron, wood, marbles, and

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stained-glass windows were sold, the very stones became the property of all who cared to possess them and at the lowest of prices.

In the early years of the Restoration, so lightly were such ruins as still remained of the desecrated abbaye esteemed, English lovers of noble architecture were enabled to purchase and to transport to England a whole Gothic chapel.

All the world owes a debt to the present proprietress of Jumièges; the ruins themselves for over sixty years have been kept in a remarkable state of repair—if one can speak of ruins and repair in the same breath. Monsieur and Madame Cointet have done more than merely to present to the world, in reverent fidelity to beauty and grandeur, what remains of one of the most interesting collections of ecclesiastical and monastic buildings in France. They have repaired and preserved them.

They have also given us a garden of princes. The highly intelligent guide, an encyclopedia of knowledge—Monsieur Détienné—will lead you past the ruined chapels of the church into garden paths rimmed with roses, with dahlias, with stately marguerites, and with fragrant heliotrope. Great lawns stretch on and on, whereon uprise ornamental trees superb in growth and admirably placed. The stairway leading to an upper terrace is one of the gems of the Louis XV style; the steps curve in such lines of grace as seem rather an ornament than indented for practical purposes. Les Charmies, where Benedictine monks have trailed their robes and

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steps, breviary in hand, at the hours of devotion; or where mighty plans have matured between abbot and a dean or canon; or where kings have stepped, tempering their royal strut to the gentle pace of their pious host—how each and every leaf in this green shelter seems to whisper the secrets breathed here, the counsels given, and the prayers lifted heavenward!

You will note the aisles were planned to form the figure of the cross. When the brethren paced these luminous paths, where the sun-rays sift through the leaves but do not dazzle, the trees were cut down almost to the level of the monkish head; for a Benedictine must ever find heaven's light descending directly upon his bared head.

Our own war must leave its seal of destruction on the ruins. A certain chapel in the Gothic church crumbled to fragments, though having miraculously escaped profanation during the revolutionary period. The terrible explosion that took place at Harfleur, in the "Pyrotechnie Belge," shook the land as far as Jumièges. The chapel is now but a mass of débris, with one or two walls standing.

Many of the more valuable ornaments and treasures of the abbaye, during the Terror, or later when Napoleon came to work order out of chaos, were transferred to Rouen.

At St. - Ouen, in that most perfect of Gothic churches, you will be startled at hearing a singularly deep-toned, sonorous-tongued bell ring out for high mass and for the great fêtes of the church. Its

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glorious voice never rang out more joyous peals than on the great day of Peace. This, the largest of all the bells that swung in the lofty Jumièges abbaye towers, is now one of Rouen's prized possessions.

When its rich notes float out upon the Normandy air it carries a message to every French man, woman, and child, and to every one else who may hear it: "France may suffer, may be brought low, may see much of its grandeur lie in ruins; but France raises high, again and again, its tricolor, as once it did its fleur-de-lis. France and its people love peace, as did its King Charles VII; but for France to remain France its people will fight, though, like unto this remaining bell of all the grandeur of Jumièges, there be but one left to cry, 'France shall not die!'"

CHAPTER XVIII

DUCLAIR

I

DUCLAIR, where we were to pass the night, impresses one as being in utmost haste to convince you it is up to date. A former posting station between Rouen and Havre, it has the pretentious importance, one accentuated by the war, of connecting America and Paris.

The guide-books aid and abet this imposing assumption. To read all that Duclair offers, from a point of view of departure, turns one dizzy. That excellent "guide Johanne's" plans for leaving the little town would almost persuade one it is Duclair, and not Boston, that is the hub of the universe. The Havre boat stops at Duclair to convey you to Rouen; the *bac* plying between the two river shores enables you to reach Evreux, or Paris, or the races at Trouville, Deauville, or Caen, or even Cherbourg, in an incredibly short space of time. There are also conveyances of every kind to suit the most exacting tastes to convey you to Jumièges, or to Caudebec, or to Etretat, at your will.

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There were some undeniable proofs that *ces Messieurs Johanne* were not overstating the excellent case they made out for Duclair. The road that is as close to the Seine as it is safe for a road to run presented a scene of continuous animation during the dinner-hour. There were motor-cars passing and repassing. There were lorries, filled with English soldiers; there were *chars-à-bancs* rattling along, with peasant women whose cheeks wore the ruddy bloom of high health; the *bac* crossed and recrossed at precisely the hours promised in the local newspapers and guide-books—and there was the lady from Paris—her dog, and her maid, to prove how closely in touch was Duclair with the great world.

It was destined we were to become acquainted with some of the more intimate details of this person's life-history. The revealing cause was the closeness of the little tables alined on the inn's balcony. Here also the builder of the one good hotel in town had had the wisdom to seize the business advantages of providing an *al fresco* view of the Seine.

We had but just given our order for our meal when a motor-car of spectacular aspect—white as snow, lined with strawberry-pink velveteen—came to a stop below the balcony. One of the occupants, enveloped in a white coat, with white shoes and turban to outrival her car's purity, descended, seized a tiny toy terrier, tucked it under her arm, and disappeared from view into the hotel interior.

Half an hour later she was our opposite neighbor.

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She announced her calling and her station in life in as pronounced a manner as her car proved her to be one of the votaries of Venus. She gave her orders to the waiter with singular familiarity; she talked to her maid, who now sat beside her, as she might to a confidante.

Maid and mistress were anxiously eyeing the approaching *bac*. One caught murmurs of agitated queryings, ejaculations, and sighs:

"If only he got the telegram!"

"Suppose he is not at home. He may have gone to the Deauville races!" were flung out with no attempt at veiling the tremor of anxiety.

In spite of the perturbed expression on the face of this descendant of Thaïs, no form of mental anguish could impair the charm of her appearance. With the scent of the pervasive perfumed sachets there was swept to the sense the agreeable vision of a creature perfectly, exquisitely gowned. The dust and wind of a motor trip had been considered in the choice of the light warmth of the summer tweed; the close lines of the Amazon-fitting skirt draped lines of molded perfection. The loose, transparent blouse, frilling at the corsage opening, and the convolvuli-garlanded hat set off a face whose delicate olives blent in exquisite gradations with the luminous hazel eyes and the masses of dark hair, whose ruddy flashes had, for a high light, the sweep of carmine across the full curved lips.

In spite of the youthful outlines of cheek and brow, there was a science of life in the pretty creat-

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ure's smile, in the very veiling of her swift glances. Her whole personality revealed a type extraordinary in its completeness. She breathed life, freedom, emancipation from conventional ruling; yet there was neither effrontery nor insolence in manner, voice, gesture; there was also a complete absence of that sense of self-abasement so characteristic a trait of the French votaries of Venus.

The snorting of the barge's engine brought both women to the balcony edge.

The maid's quick eyes first caught sight of a tall figure pressing its way through the crowd.

"*Voilà, Monsieur!*" she cried, triumph in her tone. Through a group of peasants and workmen a gentleman, booted and spurred, elbowed his way to the boat's landing-planks. To the two waving their hands from the balcony he raised his hat.

He was greeted with that prolonged roll—that roll of exuberant delight, with its staccato notes—to those caressing, explosive ejaculations characteristic of French meetings.

The gentleman himself affected an English phlegm. He was even ungracious. He was visibly irritated. He seated himself squarely before the lady from Paris. And only then he asked his question.

"Bien—what in Heaven's name is the meaning of this? What has happened? What brought you here?"

The woman curled the coil of her grace across the table. She laid her manicured finger-tips on the man's broad, sunburnt hand.

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"Mon petit, listen. It is terrible—and funny—oh, but funny! You will laugh and cry all in the same moment. Imagine to yourself, mamma—mamma—yes, she marries!—elle se marie—to-morrow, no later than to-morrow, if you please! And to whom do you think? To the tamer of lions! Yes, to that dreadful creature! He has hypnotized her—and she writes she sells everything—and then marries, to follow him—all over the world. Yes, only that."

"Well?" monosyllabled her vis-à-vis.

"But—it cannot be! It must be stopped! I go to-night, yes, this very night, to stop it all—the sale, the marriage, everything—and to put that creature where he belongs, out in the cold!—with only his maillot for covering. He can see how he likes taming me instead of the lions—or mamma! Folle—that is what she is!"

As she had prophesied, her vis-à-vis was laughing. The mingled gaiety and anger with which the outburst had been delivered had broken down his reserves. He entered, one could see, more and more into the spirit of the adventure. We heard him, at the last, offering to help in the ejection of the lion-tamer—"only—you see, at the château, there is a houseful," he added, with a shrug, as though infinitely preferring the prospect of a bout with a tamer of wild beasts to the enforced entertainment of his own set.

In the end he was forced to take the last boat across to the opposite shore. As the *bac* moved off,

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the white automobile, the white coat and turban, the toy terrier and the maid, were whirled away toward Caudebec.

It was a relief to wander forth along the bright little streets, to have done with a scene, amusing if you will, but one that, like the orris sachets, left the sense of an overladen, somewhat offensive atmosphere.

The sun was now at the last moment of its golden splendor. The distant, forested hills wore veils of misty, amber tones. The river was flushed with pale yellow tints, that melted into delicate violets that turned its surface to the color of a spring pansy.

Against the shores the waters bubbled and babbled. The spiral poplars and the young, slender lindens sent their attenuated shapes to tremble upon the light bosom of the river—long, purplish shadows that rose and fell as though there were a beating heart below the bosom of the water.

As the violet shadows deepened across the river breadth, two other shapes loomed forth under the distant trees. The picture was now complete. Into this delicate world of dying amber and golden hues a girl in a pale-pink gown and a white filmy scarf stood for a moment, looking out across at the shadow-peopled river. The man beside her stood for a long moment still, motionless, as though he also, felt he must pay tribute to the fading glories of the beautiful day.

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With a sudden swift movement he turned, his one good arm was shot out, and the pink gown and filmy scarf were clasped tight to the soldier-blues.

We left them. The hour and the coming secrecies of the enveloping night were made for lovers, for the right lovers, for those who evoked the sigh of a sort of sweet envy.

There was one more picture for us the river was to give us before we slept.

Boat-calls, steam-whistles, tootings brought us to our open windows.

The tide was at its full. Far as the eye could penetrate there was a long chain of lights. Tall masts, dark funnels, shapes of great ships loomed out of the darkness. They trod the waters with silent feet, only the continuous beating of the waves against the embankment proving the unending procession of the vessels that had left their moorings at Rouen to float down the river to the open sea.

Bright lights in cabins, red, green, and blue lights at stern or prows, sent their polychrome reflections into the night of the dark waters.

This chain of lights was dim as it wound around the curve of the Seine reaches; it became of starry brilliance as it passed below our windows, its flashing splendor trembling upon the bosom of the river as might jewels on a woman's breast, and far down toward the next bend of the shore the lights went out one by one like stars that sank before the dawn.

And the floating of this long line of ships went on

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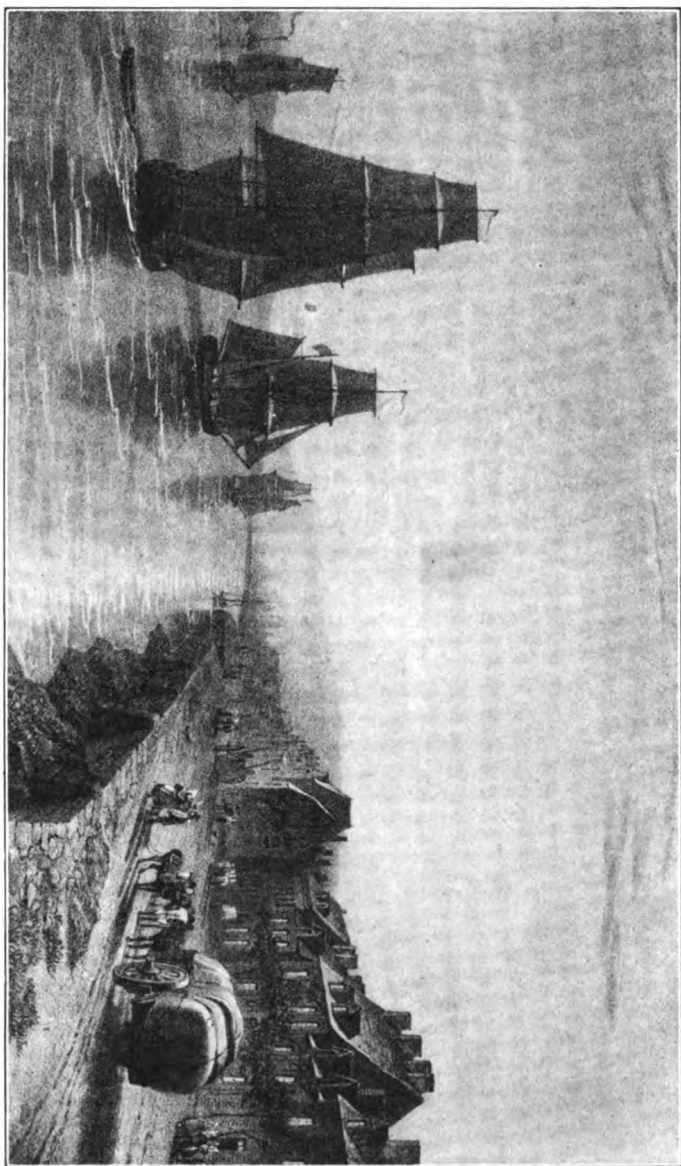
and on until the dawn touched with its rosy fingers the tall masts and the painted funnels.

II

The next morning's run along the Seine shores yielded more of those surprises in which all our journey had been so rich. The road ran close to the river; it was so close there was only a fringe of tall shrubs and grasses between us and the brilliant, gleaming waters.

The country side of our road was a continuous orchard when it was not a garden. This contrast between the land's fertility and the wide river, so close to the farmlands, was full of charm; one's head was kept perpetually bobbing about, from one side to the other, fearing to lose a single pictorial feature.

As on and on we went, the road seemed in connivance with this untouched prosperity to hold up to us the portrait of the France the German coveted and could not capture. Every turn of the wheel showed us those features that have made the long-continued reign of French wealth. There were fat cattle gluttonously feeding in deep grasses; there were busy peasant women raking in hay or helping to tie up the sheaves of wheat; boys were plowing, old men were digging up potatoes or driving a donkey to the nearest market; pigs of prodigious size were grunting and grubbing; and hens were cackling. The whole country presented that scene of rustic



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prosperity that makes the French peasants' *bas de laine* the deep purse that has rescued France again and again from disaster.

"*C'est cela, Madame, qui a payé la dette de la France,*" the famous Madame Poulard of the better days of Mont-Saint-Michel once said to me. She wore then her long blue apron; and to emphasize her remark she had given her wide pocket a significant tap. In the years that have passed since hard-working, successful French business women could affirm it was their savings that had so greatly helped to pay the milliards demanded by Bismarck as France's indemnity for an unsuccessful war, times have changed. The *bas de laine*, the deep pockets in blue aprons, do not pour out their treasures as readily as forty years ago, when the gold ran like a Pactolian stream. It is Germany's turn to pay.

CHAPTER XIX

THE LAST VOYAGE

I

OUR embarkation on the Havre-Rouen boat at Caudebec in midstream was effected with a seriousness with which one does not honor a transatlantic crossing.

A small boat, manned by a lad, finally appeared at a landing in front of the hotel. It had required some hours to find the owner of the boat, to learn its proposed place of taking on its passengers, and at what hour to be on hand so as not to miss it. Only an Oriental town and Oriental ways of conducting practical matters could match Caudebec's sluggish indifference and apathy in furthering the comfort and pleasure of the traveling public.

The group assembled on the stone landing, meanwhile, was growing in numbers. The slender oarsman seemed inadequate to rowing so many able-bodied men and women across even a calm river surface. The tempting effects of *la pièce blanche* was offered to an athletic-muscled sailor, whose jersey and nautical air suggested his familiarity with

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the sea. The effect of the silver coin was instantaneous. We were rowed by an expert to the boat's side.

Here we were met by a storm of anger. The captain hurled down at our two oarsmen a series of reproaches and invectives, and with threats which, in their turn, were punctuated by frequent gusts of profanity. Why was only one boat brought, when he had signaled for two? Why could orders never be obeyed? Here were twenty passengers who meant to go ashore, some bicycles, and a baby-carriage. How could these be carried in a boat as big as a baby's cradle? And to-morrow—did these *insensés* not know to-morrow was a fête-day at Caudebec, and then, if only one boat were brought!

Meanwhile I was experiencing a certain pride in having picked out my man. The broad-faced, good-natured, capable creature had stored away every one of the twenty passengers, the two bicycles, and the baby-carriage. He was ready to dip his oars and steer for the shore before the captain was done with his harangue.

Our own boat was also moving up-river. The calm of the river life captured us almost as soon as our seats were placed in the very prow of the boat.

Once more the magic of the Seine held us to pay forfeit to its charm. Looking upon the shore of which only a few hours ago we had been a part, and now viewing the great hills, the landscape, the disappearing town of Caudebec set among its rising heights, was to find the whole scene wondrously amplified. As the river began to turn, as it were

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upon itself, rounding the long peninsula of Jumièges, the grandeur of the mountains following, on the right, in their green, sunlit summer fullness of verdure, produced a most impressive effect of breadth, height, and luxuriance.

The forests of Le Trait, the beautiful forest of Brotonne, and now the forest of Jumièges through whose leafy embrace the great abbaye lifted its two crowns as though insistently to dominate the scene as centuries ago the monks had ruled it—these great towers and the wooded hills were following shapes—the forests indeed ended only with the close islands about Rouen.

The pictures that unrolled themselves succeeded one another all too quickly. There were pastures on one side of the river, peopled with cattle, their red-and-white hides carrying spots of color to accentuate the greens. There were the curious formations of the hills which seem symmetrically sculptured to give place to valleys; and along these fertile valleys you could watch the quiet, placid country life living itself out as centuries ago it lived, under terrors of wars and invasions our epoch has but seen repeated. A château tower, farms, tiny villas, spoke for the sense of recaptured tranquillity. Windows were open, gardens were in bloom, an indescribable peace permeated the atmosphere.

Duclair was passed again. It wore its same bright, alert air, as of a little town ready to meet the emergencies and demands of any century with a smiling energy. Beyond the town were some curious white-

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chalk quarries, in which, it is said, any number of people still live, preferring this troglodyte habitation to all others. Certain slits in the rocks showed well-cut windows—curtained—and painted doors.

The Seine took another great sweep and the forest of Mauny rose up to continue the long lines that stretch across the horizon like woven green tapestries.

There is a famous Norman church for which we were eagerly watching with the hope looming large of its yielding up its fine outlines through the low, thickly wooded plain on our left.

St.-Martin-de-Boscherville, formerly St.-Georges-de-Boscherville, is known to architects as one of the few Norman churches which were built all of a piece, so to speak. One must go back as far as the eleventh century to find its generous builder. In the stately château-fort of Tankerville, which we passed just after leaving Havre, Raoul de Tankerville, a chamberlain of William the Conqueror, probably caught his duke's mania for church-building.

There was a passion that leaped forth from the walls of this ancient church more potent, and far more contagious, than the erection of Christian churches. The legend of the château on the opposite of the river has lived longer than the fires lighted by that flame were permitted to incite two souls to court damnation.

A short distance across the Seine there rises up a fine Renaissance château. A chapel is to be

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seen still intact that gave the opportunity to a certain curé of St.-Georges-de-Boscherville, and to the fair châtelaine of the period, to play with the fates.

The château is known to this day as the Château du Corset Rouge. In the tale as it has come down to us there are those elements of passion, of religious observances intermingled with the gaieties of high life and of revolting cruelty we associate with the Renaissance epoch.

The curé, it appears, came over on certain days to say mass at the château chapel. There were at times fortuitous days and evenings when M. le Curé would prolong his visits; when good dinners and cards and light talk would inevitably lead to a desire to enliven the solitude of a charming and temptingly beautiful châtelaine. On certain journeys of the master of the house, the curé's visits were prolonged. On a certain fatal day the visit was over-prolonged. The châtelain appeared, when least expected, as it is ever recorded to be the case in such thrilling tales of conjugal infidelity. The deceived gentleman appears to have been of a violent temperament, and of an appetite for immediate action which had the most tragic results. He killed his rival, and, possessing an imagination which o'erleaps our modern range, he adjudged to his unfaithful spouse a form of punishment that lifts him to the criminal deviltries of the Borgias. Not only must a certain corset be steeped in the blood of his victim—but it must be worn!



CHURCH OF THE ABBAYE OF ST.-GEORGE OF BOCHERVILLE

THE LAST VOYAGE

"Imagine any husband, in these days, caring enough to take such a revenge!"

"In these days a man can have as many wives as he pleases—*seriatim*—be it strictly observed—so why bother about one?"

The voices behind me had taken no pains to murmur their skeptical raillery. I divined the speakers to be both too young to take other than a jocose view of the tragedy. The raillery went on. But the starting into view of rocks that seemed to have a certain family likeness to our Hudson River Palisades decided us to change our seats. The rocks were of all sorts of shapes, fantastic, irruptive, strangely and weirdly colored.

In a sudden opening, beneath an overhanging shelf of rock, fixed and immobile, like carved statues on a pedestal, the figures of two nuns appeared. In their black habits and long veils, their heads bent over their breviary, their appearance was sensational. That is precisely what the projector of this innocent joke on the traveling public intended.

The owner of a château on the other side of the rock-faced mountain conceived this original idea of ornamenting the dramatic aspect of these curious-shaped hills by introducing a religious note. He has achieved his purpose; for, at a first glance, one could never imagine those realistic figures to be inanimate—though why two nuns should choose to read the office of the hour on a narrow ledge of rock, in a damp and dimly lighted, cavelike projection, could scarcely be convincingly explained.

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II

A more interesting conversation than that of the two triflers with life was going on at my elbow. Two elderly men were discussing Maréchal Foch's strategy. One of the gentlemen compared certain of his "offensives" to the tactics Napoleon made use of. There followed an animated talk in which the great modern general's close study of the methods pursued by the master of strategy were cleverly stated and analyzed.

"And, you know, we are now approaching the column that commemorated Napoleon's remains being transferred to the smaller boat, to take them up to Courbevoie—"

This interjectional remark set me quivering. To look upon this column had been the really animating purpose of my insistent desire to investigate this part of the Seine by boat.

Years ago I had decided I must see the eagle that crowned the column—find its exact emplacement, and relive, in the very surroundings of river and landscape, the historic passing of that great scene.

I now surrendered myself to the grip of the excitement possessing me. I had no further desire to watch river lights or broad plains or to be awed by towering hills. I was set on one purpose—to watch for the column. When would it appear?

The boat made a plunge shoreward, as though to facilitate my earnest search. In an incredibly short

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while a village above the low shore-line appeared—one I had been told to look for.

This, then, was Val de la Haye. Somewhat removed from the shore, yet close enough to find it disappointing, from any point of view, as an imposing monument, a short column surmounted by an eagle and rising from the base of a pedestal, rose up shaded by some trees.

The column seemed indeed inadequate, and far too modest a reminder of as moving, as great an event. Memory flew to supply what the somewhat mean-looking column failed to commemorate with becoming pomp or beauty. The spectacle of the passing of Napoleon's remains reappeared as I had seen it represented in illuminating pages—and this is what I saw and remembered:

CHAPTER XX

NAPOLEON'S REMAINS CONVEYED FROM ST. HELENA UP THE SEINE

I

WHILE Louis Philippe was still king, was still nominally, at least, ruler of France, his short reign was ennobled by one act of retributive justice. An account, graphic, picturesque, and one painted in vivid colors, of the transportation of Napoleon's body from his all-but-forgotten grave in St. Helena, across the seas, and up the Seine to Courbevoie, close to Paris, is left us in the then young Prince de Joinville's *Vieux Souvenirs*.

This young prince, third son of Louis Philippe, had entered the navy at an early age. His two brothers, the Princes de Chartres and d'Aumale, being in the army, had been despatched to take command of certain divisions under the Maréchal Valée, and sent to Mousaia. Joinville saw them depart with a certain envy, since, shortly after, during his leave in Paris, the prince had been taken ill.

In the Palace of the Tuileries there appeared one day, in this winter of 1840, at his bedside, the king, his father, and Monsieur Rémusat, the latter then Minister of the Interior, "an unexpected visit which

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filled me with surprise," the prince confesses. "My amazement increased when my father said to me, 'Joinville, thou wilt start forth for Ste.-Hélène and bring back Napoleon's coffin.'"¹

One might well have been "surprised" at receiving a far less astounding order. The young prince confides to us in his *Memoirs* that had he not been in bed he would have fallen to the ground. "At first," he admits, "I was in no sense flattered by the errand of undertaker on which I was being sent, in another hemisphere. However," he added, quickly, "I was a soldier, and it was not my right to discuss an order."

While the prince was convalescing, this project of bringing back Napoleon's remains to France not only was convulsing the press and the country, but in the *Chambre des Députés* was the occasion of unchaining those political passions which the very name of Napoleon could not fail to arouse in a France not yet freed from its own "violent fever" of successive revolutionary attacks.

While Napoleon had been suffering "persecution," as he himself terms his treatment, during his imprisonment, at the hands of his English captors, and neglect during the long years he had been lying in the only quiet his great spirit had ever known, in his tomb at St. Helena, France had removed their crowns from the heads of two kings—one of whose crowns had been sanctified at Rheims—had attempted to establish two revolutions, and was now

¹ Prince de Joinville, *Vieux Souvenirs*, 1818-48

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anything but tranquil under this, their third accepted monarch.

Louis Philippe possessed the neutral virtues of good intentions. But the Revolution had made the bourgeoisie the true French king. The Chambre was now the arena where the struggle of these two rivals—this growing, new bourgeois France and the dying feudal conception of monarchy—was already come to violent death-grips.

Thiers's project—for it was entirely his—to restore to France the dead body of its greatest conqueror was a political trick. He needed, as prime ministers are often in need of such subterfuges, a new rallying force in his favor for insuring a large majority in the coming election.

Things political in France were in a dangerous state. Thiers, as head of the government, had felt the pulse of the people and had found it alarmingly feverish. There was neither enthusiasm nor life in the body politic for politics as it was then being manipulated.

The times were critical.

There had been several fluctuating conspiracies; the dangerous principle of "the rights of man" was gaining headway. The bourgeoisie were fighting their way inch by inch to gain pre-eminence; the battle between the monarchical principle and the parliamentary principle was reaching a climax. All reverence, all consideration for royalty were declining. The bourgeoisie, having accepted Louis Philippe as king, had believed this restoration of

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monarchy—of a constitutional king “who reigns but does not govern”—would hold the people in check. But the bourgeoisie, being above all else a class governed by self-interest, ignored the people and the poor. The rights of man, therefore, were being listened to. Thiers, wherever he looked, heard grumbling thunder in the political air. A lightning stroke might clear the atmosphere.

Strong remedies, Thiers felt, must immediately be administered. *L'Ennui de la France* must be dissipated. Stimulants, and exciting ones, must be resorted to. Thiers was to be delivered, under the presence of what he felt to be a political crisis, of one of his most original, as it was assuredly one of his most genial, projects. No fiction-writer, however gifted as an inventive or imaginative author, but must concede that, for a prime minister to send thousands of miles for the dead body of the man whom France had repudiated, sacrificing the “adventurer” to placate Europe; whose imprisonment for seven years had been accepted as just punishment for his audacious attempt to rule Europe and his failure at Waterloo; whose body had been allowed to remain under the willows of St. Helena for eighteen years unsought, unsung—for Thiers to have conceived of the project of stimulating popular favor by resurrecting the Napoleonic legend was to prove himself a master of expediency.

France took its tonic dose at first with unsuspecting rapture. Emotion rose to high pitch in the Chambre when Rémusat, in a thrilling speech, an-

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nounced to the Deputies that "in honor of glory and of genius, of greatness and of misfortune," the decision had been reached that France should ask of England permission to have Napoleon's body brought back to rest in French soil. The very unexpectedness of this great event enhanced the enthusiasm with which its announcement was met. The *Chambre* was adjourned "in order to give full sway to sentiments that were overflowing, and to allow a poetry hitherto unknown under these arches to take its flight."

The press took up the mounting note of exultation, of this a nation's reawakened enthusiasm for its national hero. All France, in a word, was once more under the glamour of a name that was as a glorious trumpet-call; that enabled every Frenchman to remember, in love and gratitude, the conqueror who had conquered Europe, placing France high above all nations, and whose downfall had sown, it was now believed, all the disasters, disaffections, and uncertainties which even this third kingship could not avert or control.

Divided though Bonapartists, legitimists, constitutionalists, all parties might be, the malady of *l'Ennui de la France* had been succeeded, in any case, by the greatest awakening of popular enthusiasm seen in the kingdom since 1811—since the birth of Napoleon's son, the King of Rome.

One voice, and only one, was raised against the universal choir of joyous acclamation. But the voice was that of the greatest of the French poets

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and orators of his day. Lamartine, who had been nursed by his mother in hatred of Napoleon, found in this historic event the culminating point of his oratorical powers. His speech, delivered before the fullest meeting of the *Chambre* in many a day, stands among those which proved to a critical world that a master orator had arisen. The speech itself was accepted unanimously as a masterpiece. Too lengthy to reproduce in its entirety, certain paragraphs, at least, can be quoted, as proving the pitch of eloquence attained.

After having expressed his lack of enthusiasm for the whole project Lamartine said, "I should not have considered it a misfortune for the memory of Napoleon had his destiny left him a still longer time under the willows of Ste.-Hélène."¹

"Had this great general been a completely great man, an irreproachable citizen; had he been the Washington of Europe; if, after having defended the territory, he had regulated, moderated, organized the liberal institutions and the dawn of democracy in France; . . . if he had made himself the providence of the people; if, after having put in motion the springs of a temperate military government, he had effaced himself, as did Solon and the lawmaker of America; if he had retired, behind his disinterestedness and his glory, to leave full play to liberty—who knows if all the homage of a crowd that chiefly adores that which crushes it would have been rendered him? Who knows if he would not sleep

¹ Louis Barthou, *Lamartine, Orateur*, 1916.

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more quietly, and perhaps more neglected, in his tomb?"

Certain phrases in this great speech are singularly significant of the immense power wielded by time, in adjudging the value of men whose exploits are played out before the eyes of contemporaries. Who now would couple Mirabeau, Barnave, and Bailly with the great name of Napoleon?

Yet Lamartine, in alluding to the heroes whom France had not honored, invokes the memory of Mirabeau: "Where is he? He rests in the cellar of a secular building that twice has been used as a sewer." He refers to Barnave and to Bailly, "who sleep unknown, with the remains of other revolutionary heroes." He gives to Lafayette the more glorious praise, "lying under the humble cross of a family tomb"!

"And the man of the eighteenth Brumaire, the man to whom France owes everything except liberty, a triumphant Revolution is to go beyond the seas to give him an imperial tomb! This triumphant Revolution—I ask you—is there on French soil a monument large enough, sacred enough, national enough to contain it? . . . Be careful—reflect on the encouragements given to genius, at all costs. I doubt their effect on our future. I do not care for those men who have as official doctrine liberty, legality, progress, and who take as a symbol a sword and despotism. . . ."

The sensations and reflections evoked by these daring attacks on Napoleon's methods of govern-

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ment and his conquests served greatly to cool the mounting wave of unconsidered enthusiasm that had swayed the Chambre. It is recorded that "the sensation created was profound and universal."

General approbation acclaimed Lamartine's presentment of the pregnant query:

"Where shall the great tomb be placed? In the Invalides? Under the Column of the Place de Vendôme? In the Madeleine? At the Panthéon? At St.-Denis? There he would shine solely by virtue of his isolation. There are contacts that history and even stones should avoid. At the Arc de Triomphe? It is too pagan. Death is sacred, and its resting-place must be in sanctified ground."

At this point the great orator appears to have been gifted with prophetic vision; for he exclaims:

"If the future, as we may hope, reserves for us other triumphs, what conqueror, what general would dare to pass beneath the Arc?"

"Such a decision would be to interdict the Arc de Triomphe; it would be to close the door of national glory which must remain open for our future destinies."

Had Lamartine, indeed, foreseen, as in a vision, the "coming of the glory of the Lord"? Had the poet who is also seer dimly divined the return of the millions of conquering heroes, of all the nations who fought victoriously for "liberty, legality, and progress"? Had his fine ear caught the rhythmic cadence of those war-weary feet, stepping to the

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intoxicating music of Victory, making the arches of the great Arc de Triomphe ring with the glorious pæan of Democracy triumphant?

In his peroration, Lamartine proved his powers of discernment and his art in manipulating the difficulties of conciliation. While he "proclaims the rights of apotheosis and of admiration in order to persuade the people to listen to the voice of public reason," he contends that while his vote would be cast for placing the Emperor's remains in the Champ de Mars, "where Napoleon would be alone, and where his statue and his genius would again pass in review our soldiers," Lamartine's preference for this particular emplacement is less zealous than is his earnest desire to have the right inscription engraved on the statue or tomb destined to perpetuate his memory.

"Remember to inscribe on that monument, where he must be at once known as soldier, consul, legislator, emperor—remember to write thereon the only inscription that proclaims at once your enthusiasm and your prudence, the only inscription which can honor this unique man and satisfy the difficult times in which we live. Let it be

To NAPOLEON, only.

"These three words, attesting that this military genius had no equal, will prove at the same time to

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France, to Europe, to the world, that if this generous nation knows how to honor its great men, she also judges them, she can distinguish their mistakes, she can even separate them from their race and from those who menaced liberty in their name, and in raising this monument, in thus replacing this great memory, she has no thought of kindling from these ashes either war, or tyranny, or legitimists, or pretenders, or imitators."

The effect produced on his audience of such eloquence was electric. For once, at least, a great oratorical effort bore immediate results. The *Chambre* revoked the credit of two millions of francs it had voted, and the sum originally proposed, a million for the expenses involved in the removal of the remains, was universally adjudged.

II

While Paris was following, with passionate interest, every varying phase of these debates in the *Chambre*, the Prince de Joinville was rapidly convalescing.

On being pronounced fit to take up his command, de Joinville started for Toulon. His duty, at least, was clear before him; unvexed by either political or sentimental obscurities, the young prince, as a "soldier," could follow in the path of duty marked out by his superiors with but one paramount longing—to get through with his task and to see it well done.

De Joinville's own opinion of Napoleon is clearly, unmistakably rendered.

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"Above Napoleon, an enemy of my race, the assassin of the Duc d'Enghien, who in his fall had precipitated a France ruined, dismembered, into the jaws of that redoubtable game of chance in which naïve crowds are so often victims of the political croupier 'universal suffrage' (above this Napoleon) there was the incomparable warrior, whose genius had covered, even in defeat, our armies with an immortal glory. In going forth to take his ashes away from a foreign soil, it was as though we raised the conquered flag of France, at least so we hoped, and this point of view reconciled me with my mission."¹

It was with such really noble and elevated sentiments that the prince set forth. Carrying with him all his ministerial and royal orders, he retook command of his frigate, *La Belle Poule*.

His Royal Highness, Francis Ferdinand Philippe Louis Marie d'Orléans, Prince de Joinville, was then in what is poetically termed the very flower of his youth. Thackeray, in his somewhat satirical account of "The Second Funeral of Napoleon," gives us, in relenting mood, a flattering portrait of the prince and of the crew of *La Belle Poule*:

"Monseigneur, my dear, is really one of the finest young fellows it is possible to see. A tall, broad-chested, slim-waisted, brown-faced, dark-eyed young prince, with a great beard (and other martial qualities, no doubt) beyond his years. As he strode into the Chapel of the Invalides he made no small im-

¹ Prince de Joinville, *Vieux Souvenirs*.

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pression, I can tell you, upon the ladies assembled to witness the ceremony. . . .

"Nor are the crew of the *Belle Poule* less agreeable to look at than their commander. A more clean, smart, active, well-limbed set of lads never 'did dance' upon the deck of the famed *Belle Poule*. . . ."

The youthful commander speaks himself with enthusiasm of the joy he experienced in being once more among his "brave gens," his sailors and crew seeming to him like a second family.

Some of Napoleon's most devoted friends and followers, those who composed what was called the mission to St. Helena—General Bertrand, M. de Las Cases, and General Gourgaud as well as others—were among the passengers on *La Belle Poule*.

Of the questionable taste of General Gourgaud, in thus associating himself with these other tried friends of the "great warrior," what must one think after reading M. Frédéric Masson's illuminating pages?¹

The facts of Gourgaud's treacheries not being known to the world of that day as fully as they are to ours, de Joinville enlarges on the pleasure and profit derived from the conversation of these intimates of Napoleon. The long journey was agreeably shortened by these contributions made to the already daily growing Napoleonic legend.

But it was no imaginative, historical record to which those listened who were privileged to hear the men who had been side by side with the Emperor

¹ Frédéric Masson, *Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène, 1815-25.*

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in many of his greatest achievements, who had followed him in battle, who had seen him at the zenith of his power, and had followed him into exile.

An idea of the geographical distance to which the allies and English justice had exiled Napoleon can best be judged by following the prince's narrative of his voyage. The *Belle Poule* touched first at Cadiz; then at the port of Teneriffe for water and supplies; finally, going across the Atlantic, Bahia, Brazil, was chosen as a route preferable to rounding the Cape of Good Hope. From Bahia there was a long, uneventful journey of many weeks across the Australian Atlantic, escorted by "numerous albatrosses," to confront at last the grim uprising rocks of St. Helena.

III

The prince describes the island as a "black island" of volcanic irruptive outlines, like the "Martinique, but without its superb vegetation." To him it seemed a bit of Scotland planted in the midst of the ocean, always fretted by the *alizé*,¹ a wind sweeping the whole island, with a fatiguing continuity. Above the rocky, mountainous heights there hung a perpetual "bonnet" of thick clouds.

The town of Jamestown, the capital, the prince found to be a miserable village crawling along a narrow valley sunk between "sad rocks"; above, on the stony heights, gloomed the fortress only to be

¹ The winds that blow from east to west in the tropics.

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reached by a flight of six hundred stairs. A sinister gloom seemed to pervade the whole island, the governor's residence, Plantation House, the "valley of the tomb," and the grave itself, with its legendary willows, as well as Longwood, Napoleon's "prison." The whole aspect of the island, indeed, was one well calculated to "kill by slow fire" the great, active-souled warrior condemned to die by inches in this melancholy, windy purgatory.

The prince gives scant space to his interviews with the British military authorities. One detail of these preliminaries is, however, of primal importance. Young as de Joinville was, he gave rare proof of possessing both sagacity and foresight; he had no mind, he affirms, either to carry back to France "imaginary remains" nor a mass of infection. The coffin, therefore, it was requested, should be opened.

This disinterment was a matter of no small difficulty.

To Major-General Emmett, R.E., who filled the post of commanding royal engineer at St. Helena during the last years of Napoleon's life, to this officer had been confided the task of preparing Napoleon's tomb for the burial of his remains.

The general, at the time of his appointment to his post at St. Helena, was gazetted with the local rank of major. His account of his labors in constructing the tomb were first given to the world in 1912.¹

"On examining the ground for the grave," he writes, "I decided on making a vault of respectable

¹ *The Century Magazine*, 1912.

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depth. Substantial walls were made at the sides and ends, and a sarcophagus for the coffin, supported on stone pillars, to keep it from the damp. The sarcophagus was made of the large flagstones sent from England for the kitchen of the new house being erected for him, and of others from the gun platforms of the batteries."

Into this carefully prepared sarcophagus the coffin itself was "let down by tackles," a large and thick flagstone forming the covering. "This was again covered over by courses of masonry set in cement and cramped with iron, in the presence of Napoleon's staff, such precautions having been desired by them to guard against clandestine removal."

On the request by the prince for an examination of the remains, it was arranged that the disinterment should take place on the 15th of October, 1840.

This date marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of Napoleon's arrival at St. Helena.

In the presence of the representatives of France and England, the work of exhumation was begun; the first serious difficulty was the cutting away of the bed of masonry, ten and a half feet thick, with its iron clasps; under this stone covering was found a "strong stone slab . . . forming the upper surface of the inner sarcophagus of wrought stone covering the coffin." The sarcophagus was ready for opening. The dust was then purified by chlorin and the slab was raised.

The coffin was discovered resting on wrought-stone pillars. The heavy coffin was raised by hooks

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and slings and taken to a tent prepared for its reception.

A beautiful coffin or sarcophagus of polished ebony, protected by an oak case, had been sent from France.

On the lid, inlaid in gold letters, the word "Napoléon" had been set.

After the outer coffin had been removed, under the tent, a second lead one was found, and within that one still another of wood.

The body itself lay within this wooden coffin; about the remains was wrapped a lining of sheet tin, within which a coverlet of white satin enveloped all that death and burial had left of Napoleon.

The body, found to be in an extraordinary state of preservation, was exposed to the air for but two minutes.

Restored to its resting-place, the coffins were quickly and skilfully closed, and finally secured in the leaden one brought from France. The key of this sarcophagus was given to the French commissioner.

The scene at the grave produced a most moving impression on the soldiers, the commissioners, the English representatives, and the French committee. The exhumation took place at night. Silence reigned. The great stars of this southern hemisphere looked down on the weird spectacle of soldiers and generals in uniform, of motionless guards and sailors, of grave-faced, pale Frenchmen staring down at an oblong bit of earth into which strangely garbed men were prying.

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The only sounds were the dull thud of the loosened earth thrown up on the sides of the grave, the jangling of tools and chains, and the rhythmic clangor of the heavy hammering. The awed silence was broken also, occasionally, by a command given by the English engineer.

The flickering torches lighted up the scene with their yellow flame—a flame that was to spread on and on, to brighten and glow, until, as the years rolled on, the true character of the man whose mortal remains on this eventful night were brought to receive their tardy due would shine before men as one unique in kinship, in generosity, and in many of the attributes of true grandeur.¹

IV

On delivering the key of the ebony sarcophagus to the Comte de Chabot, the king's commissioner, Captain Alexander declared to him, in the name of the governor, that this coffin, containing the mortal remains of the Emperor Napoleon, was considered as at the disposal of the French government from that day, and from the moment at which it should arrive at the place of embarkation, toward which it was about to be sent under the orders of General Middlemore. The king's commissioner replied that he was charged by his government, and in its name, to accept the coffin from the hands of the British au-

¹ Lord Rosebery, *The Last Phase*. Arthur Levy, *Napoléon Intime, Œuvres de Frédéric Masson sur Napoléon*.

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thorities, and that he and the other persons composing the French Mission were ready to follow it to Jamestown, where the Prince de Joinville, superior commandant of the expedition, would be ready to receive it and conduct it on board his frigate.

The inspection of the coffin had been conducted with becoming ceremonies. There were several English officers, the French generals who had accompanied the prince, and the Prince de Joinville assembled about the four coffins in which all that was mortal of Napoleon had been rendered to the dust to which we must all return. It seemed, however, as though the earth itself had cognizance of the glory confided to it. For on opening the four coffins the body had been found to be in a wonderful state of preservation.

“The body seemed covered with a slight moss: one might have said we saw it through a diaphanous cloud. It was in very truth his head; a pillow showed it uplifted; his large brow, his eyes, whose pupils could be divined beneath the lids that were still framed by some eyelashes; his cheeks were swollen, only the nose had suffered; his half-open lips disclosed three teeth startlingly white; on the chin the outline of the beard could be distinctly traced; his two hands appeared to belong to some one still breathing, so vivid was their flesh coloring.”¹

The man who most hated Napoleon—Châteaubriand—has given us perhaps the most vivid por-

¹ *L'Abbé Coquereau*, quoted by Châteaubriand.

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traitures of Napoleon's two faces, the living and the dead, at St. Helena.

In describing the impression produced on certain travelers who, during the Emperor's captivity, had seen and talked with him, the famous French writer (Châteaubriand) thus describes him: "His head resembled a marble bust whose whiteness had been slightly yellowed by time. There were neither lines in his forehead nor hollows in his cheeks; his soul seemed serene. This apparent calm convinced one that the flame of his genius had died out." But when he smiled the whole face was illuminated; "the more serious the face the more beautiful is the smile."

The description given of Napoleon's last moments is among the most eloquent of this author's pages:

"Toward the end of February, 1821, he felt himself obliged to take to his bed, from which he never arose. 'Am I fallen low enough?' he murmured. 'I, who moved the world, cannot lift my eyelid.'

"The 3d of May Napoleon had himself administered extreme unction and received the sacrament. The silence of the room was broken by the death cough mingled with the rhythm of the clock's pendulum; the shadow, before coming to rest on the sun-dial, made a few turns; the planet that moved upon its face was slow to extinguish itself. On the 4th Cromwell's (Napoleon's) agony rose to tempestuous heights; almost all the trees of Longwood were uprooted. At last, on the 5th, at six minutes to eleven o'clock at night, Bonaparte rendered to

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God the most powerful breath of life that has ever animated human clay."

V

The last words Napoleon was heard to utter distinctly were:

"Tête d'Armée."

As a general, in his favorite green coat, white vest, and knee-breeches of white cashmere, white silk stockings, and his *Grand Cordon de la Légion*, his body was laid out. The change of his face, after death, was remarkable. He had grown stout in the face during the last months of his life. The transfiguring process of death having begun its marvelous embellishment, Marchand, his adoring valet, said, "In this state the Emperor had his First Consul's face: his mouth, slightly contracted, gave to his countenance an expression of satisfaction, and he did not look over thirty."

His death-mask, taken by Doctor Burton "at the peril of his life,"¹ shows much of the rare delicacy and finish of the exquisite features, and also this extraordinary recapture of his earlier manhood's youth. This death-mask, taken after this first fleeting appearance of the former beauty of his face and of its expression, Marchand says of it, "It is the face of the moment, but not that one of six hours after death, which was that of the consul's."

In the château of La Malmaison, in a certain alcove you may look upon the very bed on which the

¹ Frédéric Masson, *Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène*, 1815-25.

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Emperor was laid out. Above the empty bed, pathetic in its simplicity, in its Spartan denudation, one would say, of all comfort—above there hangs a picture.¹ The canvas represents Napoleon lying in his simple state, in his green coat, with his general's hat, his white silk hose, his white vest, and his knee-breeches. Across the coat rests the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honor.

VI

"I desire that my ashes should repose in France," the Emperor had said to Arnott, the one English doctor whom he tolerated, because he "loved brave men of any country" and because he could talk to him of Egypt. Napoleon, who faced death in his narrow bed, in his airless Longwood prison, with that fortitude and indifference he had shown in his battles, had forestalled what he felt would be the last supreme English cruelty, "the captivity inflicted on his corpse."²

To his dear General Bertrand he had said, "Bertrand, if, after my death, my body remains in the hands of my captors, you will see that it is interred here." The spot designated was in a valley where from a plain one could catch a glimpse of the sea. Beneath three willows there ran a little brook, whose

¹ This bed of Napoleon, transferred from Longwood, and the picture are the gift to the Malmaison Museum of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Tuck, owners of the Château de Vert Mont, opposite the château and park of La Malmaison.

² Frédéric Masson, *Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène*, 1815-25, p. 488.

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cool, sweet water Napoleon had found to his taste. Thereafter Chinamen were sent daily for this water for the Emperor's use.

In another interview his expressed will had been to have his remains taken for burial to the "banks of the Seine"; or to the "island near Lyons" at the confluence of the Rhône and the Saône; or "to the cathedral at Ajaccio, Corsica." As the English governor, even after the death of Napoleon, imposed his will on that of his prisoner already entered into earthly immortality, it was neither under the Gothic nave of the Corsican cathedral nor on the banks of the Seine nor on the island near Lyons that the Emperor's body was to rest. English courtesy conceded burial only in the valley of the Geranium, near the Fountain of Tochet.¹

The very name to be engraved on the tomb became a matter of bitter dispute. The Emperor's followers insisted that the name to be inscribed should be the one he had rendered immortal—Napoleon. Hudson Lowe, the Emperor's most determined, inflexible persecutor, asserted it must be Bonaparte. Nameless, therefore, since no agreement was reached, with neither mark nor date, the slab of marble had fronted the sky. The mortal body of the greatest mind and soul in Europe lay at rest, beneath the shade of three willows, with a trickling brook and the sighing of a tropical breeze to sing perpetual threnodies.

¹ Major Emmett calls the site of Napoleon's grave "Slane's Valley, near Huts' gate."

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VII

The inspection of the remains having been pronounced satisfactory, the Prince de Joinville demanded permission to have the coffin transferred at once to his ship.

At ten o'clock, on the very morning of the termination of the labors of replacing the remains in the coffin destined to proceed to France, the Abbé Vignali, who had administered the Emperor, said mass at Longwood. The French Mission alone was present.

At eleven o'clock the English arrived. Twelve grenadiers carried the coffin to the *allée* of the garden. There the hearse sent from France was placed, awaiting the remains.

The mantle worn at Marengo was placed on this hearse, on which General Bertrand laid a sword.

"A car drawn by four horses, decked with funeral emblems, had been prepared before the arrival of the expedition to receive the coffin, as well as a pall, and all the other suitable trappings of mourning. When the sarcophagus was placed on the car the whole was covered with a magnificent imperial mantle brought from Paris, the four corners of which were borne by Generals Bertrand and Gourgaud, Baron Las Cases, and M. Marchand. At half past three o'clock the funeral car began to move, preceded by a chorister bearing the cross, and by the Abbé Coquereau. M. de Chabot acted as chief mourner.

"All the authorities of the island, all the principal

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inhabitants, and the whole of the garrison, followed in procession from the tomb to the quay. But with the exception of the artillerymen necessary to lead the horses, and occasionally to support the car when descending some steep parts of the way, the places nearest the coffin were reserved for the French Mission.

“General Middlemore, although in a weak state of health, persisted in following the whole way on foot, together with General Churchill, chief of the staff in India, who had arrived only two days before from Bombay. The immense weight of the coffins and the unevenness of the road rendered the utmost carefulness necessary throughout the whole distance. Colonel Trelawney commanded in person the small detachment of artillerymen who conducted the car, and, thanks to his great care, not the slightest accident took place. From the moment of departure to the arrival at the quay the cannon of the forts and the *Belle Poule* fired minute-guns. After an hour’s march the rain ceased for the first time since the commencement of the operations; and on arriving in sight of the town we found a brilliant sky and beautiful weather.”

The description of this moving and picturesque scene is far more touching and more human in its sentiment than the above:

“When the coffin began its slow descent down from the heights of the mountain, to the sound of the cannon, escorted by the English infantry, arms reversed, the Dead March of ‘Saul’ played to the dull

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roar of the drums, an indescribable emotion took possession of the crowd.”¹

Nature, like the hard hearts of his cruel jailers, seemed on this great day to be in relenting mood. The teasing wind of that obstinate, persistent *alizé* had stopped its hot and nerve-racking breath; an air still and pulseless made one sensible of an enveloping atmosphere of reverential calm. And, as though to typify the glory of a man so great that historians seem born expressly to record his genius, the gorgeous colors of a surpassingly beautiful sunset beflagged the scene, as though to outrival the superb Tricolor that floated at the poop of the shallop.

The moving scene was lighted by these resplendent colors; the vivid gold of the dying sun softened the tones of the grim rocks, below whose frowning fortresses along the beach were ranged the English authorities and the English troops.

Once the body was in possession of the prince, the French commander, there was heard the roar of the salute from *La Belle Poule's* cannon, and the boat made its way across the cobalt seas. Dozens of oars, striking the water in perfect precision, made a liquid, rhythmic music.

Napoleon's generals were grouped about the central figure of the handsome young prince. The Tricolor caught the dying sun-rays of the resplendent

¹ Prince de Joinville, *Vieux Souvenirs*.

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sunset, whose effulgence harmonized the pure whites of the crews, the gold-braided uniforms of the officers, and "the black rocks," now illumined with color, under the golden glow.

VIII

Once embarked on its long voyage across distant seas to France, in that journey of fifty-one days, did that still body in its casket say nothing to the heart and mind of the one traitor aboard? Did its eloquent calm bring no sting of remorseful regret to Gourgaud?¹ Did that unfaithful friend and general never repent him of his false statements, of his assuring English Ministers on his return to England in May, 1818, that Napoleon's illness was a "farce," that stricter measures should be taken to prevent his escape, that "Napoleon only exasperates his keepers

¹ All those familiar with Lord Rosebery's *Napoleon: The Last Phase*, and with other English authorities who have written on this subject of Gourgaud's treachery, know that English historians take a very different view of General Gourgaud's *Revelations*. Either they are treated as harmless—"We are convinced that he revealed nothing of the slightest importance either now or afterward in London," as Lord Rosebery asserts—or they are taken as Sir Walter Scott alleges they should be accepted, as the statements of one "who acted a double part" . . . [of] "one who had been a sort of agent for the British government."

Lord Rosebery takes an entirely different view of Gourgaud's departure from St. Helena and of his actions on reaching England. His contention is that "Gourgaud's departure is merely a Russian mission . . ." Also that Gourgaud's departure was utilized by the Emperor as a means "of communicating with Europe through an officer who could thoroughly explain the situation and policy of Longwood."

Masson's point of view appears to be the more plausible analysis of a character as ambiguous as is that of Gourgaud.

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by his irritable demands the better to hide his true designs”?

Does the heart of a traitor really beat to the same measure as that of an honest man?

The French ship was carrying on its way at least one true, broken-hearted friend. Marchand, the Emperor’s devoted body-servant—nurse, friend, confidant, the valet who saw in his master the greatest of heroes and the unconquerable conqueror—Marchand could finger over, as piously as a devout believer his chaplet, the brilliants of the necklace his beloved master had given him.

As he lay on his dying bed, Napoleon had ordered Marchand to bring him the jewel, a string of superb diamonds, the one remaining jewel he possessed.

“That good Hortense,” he said, “gave it to me at La Malmaison, thinking I might have need of it. I believe it to be worth two hundred thousand francs. Hide it about thy person. I give it thee. I ignore in what a state my affairs may be in Europe. It is the only thing of value of which I can dispose. . . .”

What need of possessions to be willed away for him who had held in his hand the scepter of a conquered world? . . .

What a world of memories must have been evoked at the mere mention of the word “La Malmaison”! From Napoleon’s victorious return from Egypt, from Italy, when as general, then Consul, and later when he mounted to the steps of the throne, on to the tragic ending of that marvelous career of power, of a splendor all but unparalleled—to what a path

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of glory his "star" had led him, until, darkened, in eclipse, he must stumble along the calvary of his punishment, no star in sight; and in every stage of these his great, as in his despairing, fortunes had La Malmaison seen his steps wander about its park and galleries.

A few days before starting for St. Helena Napoleon had sought refuge at the château. The 24th of June, at dinner, Napoleon asked of Hortense, who alone among all the members of his numerous family—now pseudo-kings and queens in exile—had remained at La Malmaison:

"I wish to retire to La Malmaison. It is yours. Will you give me hospitality?"

Already a semi-prisoner, under the guard of General Becker, Napoleon took once more, and for the last time, the road he had trod as hero, as conqueror, to the house where he had known all the best and happiest days of his life, and where even at the pinnacle of power and fame "he was of an immense simplicity."

It was from La Malmaison he took his journey across France to Rambouillet, to Tours, to Poitiers, to St.-Maixent, to Niort, and to Rochefort.

That mistaken moment of confidence when the Emperor, with a naïveté that seems the more amazing when one remembers his own former ambitious designs on England, felt such "confidence" in English courtesy and in her sense of justice that, as he uncovered, on stepping on board the *Bellerophon*, he could exclaim, "I come to place myself under

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the protection of your prince and of your laws"—that belief in an implacable enemy's generosity or of the allies' magnanimity was the fatal impulse that landed Napoleon at St. Helena.

He whose most soul-stirring military ambition had been the conquest of England to say, after the first formalities had been interchanged on board the *Bellerophon*: "And now I must inform myself concerning English customs. . . . I must learn to conform to them, since I shall probably pass the remainder of my life in England." What an amazing state of mind!

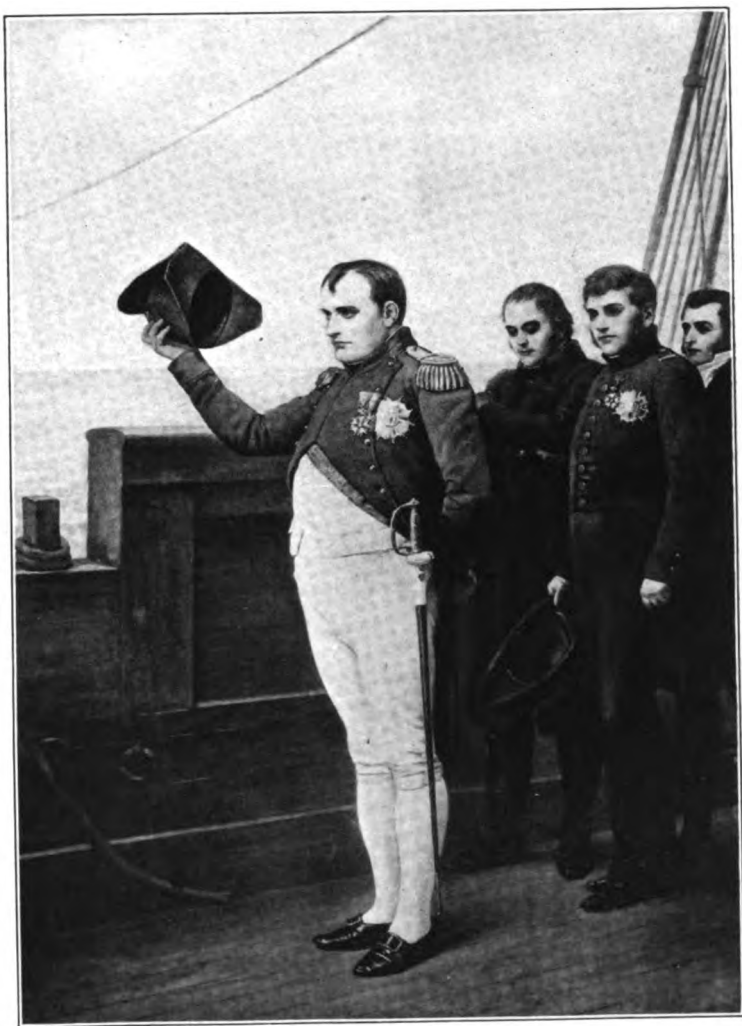
Verily, the occasional lapses in a right gaging of critical situations, at critical moments, comforts less brilliant intellects with the pleasing reflection that genius, at times, can prove itself as dull as any mediocre intelligence.

IX

On this return of all that was mortal of Napoleon to France the Prince de Joinville, on *La Belle Poule's* reaching Cherbourg, believed his own part in the mission of this transportation of the remains to be at an end.

But sealed orders awaited him; he was commanded to transfer the remains to a steamboat that the whole length of the Seine, from Havre to Paris, should witness the re-entry of the Conqueror into his France.

This program was not in the least to the taste of



NAPOLEON'S ADIEU TO FRANCE

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the youthful commander. At St. Helena he notes: "The whole affair transpired between the English army, on one hand, and our naval forces, on the other, with that chivalry and serious aspect which always accompanies international relations when confided to men of the sword. In France, the transportation of Napoleon's remains took on quite another character. It was above all else a spectacle."

At Cherbourg the body was transferred from *La Belle Poule* to a steamer, *Normandie*.

A thousand guns are said to have saluted the arrival of the bier.

The arrangements on the *Normandie* were indeed spectacular. "A temple with twelve pillars and a dome to cover it from the wet and moisture was surrounded with velvet hangings and silver fringe. At the head was a gold cross, at the foot a gold lamp; other lamps were kept constantly burning within, and vases of burning incense were hung around an altar hung with velvet and silver and at the mizzen-mast of the vessel, and four silver eagles at each corner of the altar."¹

Spectacular as may have been the *cortège* to the eyes and taste of a highly bred, fastidious prince, Napoleon, by his own birth not so very far removed from the people, was to receive along the banks of the Seine, where he had hoped to lie, those rapturous acclamations that had greeted his living ears on how many a battlefield.

And on what a scene the cold November sun shed

¹ Thackeray, *Second Funeral of Napoleon*.

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its pallid rays! Shores lined with peasants in holiday attire; civil authorities scarved with their tricolor sashes; priests in gorgeous vestments chanting benedictions; soldiers wearing the fading glories of their war-worn uniforms; and from Havre to the Parisian suburb of Courbevoie there rang the never-ending chorus of a great people's shout of welcome to all that was mortal of the immortal genius who had made France the rival of Rome.

Up past the villages, the farmhouses, and the forests of the Seine, the funeral barge with its short casket, covered with an imperial-purple velvet pall, escorted by the crew that had safely brought the body on its long overseas journey, on and on the silent *cortège* moved among the still waters.

The banks of the Seine, after all, as Napoleon had wished, had witnessed his apotheosis.

Of all those thousands who crowded the banks of the Seine there were none who should have watched for the coming of their real liberator with more lasting gratitude than the peasants. Not a farmer, not a peasant owner of land along those fertile orchards and rich meadowlands of Honfleur, or Caudebec, or Duclair but was the richer because the man whose processional *cortège* was to most of them but a spectacular ovation had lived, had liberated France from the tyranny of the Terror, had organized out of chaos a magnificent working government, had struck from the hand of the nobles the last of their feudal rights—among others the law of primogeniture.

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In giving to the peasant the right to own property Napoleon had civilized the people. How many of those ruddy-faced farmers, in their holiday blouses, standing with eyes glued to the coming "show," realized all they owed to this "man of the people," as Napoleon proudly called himself, though, in reality, he had all of the aristocrat's leanings. Even in our day it is the historical fashion to recall Napoleon's crimes of ambition, his political mistakes, his arrogance, and his vices. The benefits he conferred on France, above all, on the people, are not even now appreciated; those who inherit these results of his reign delight still to dwell on the irregularities of his private life and the faults of his political career.

Among all those who stood on the Seine shores, those who most truly mourned the dead hero, were those who had fought under him, those who had suffered thirst and hunger in long marches, those who had survived the frozen horrors of the Russian steppes.

Châteaubriand, though his hate of Napoleon was matched only by that of Mme. de Staël, yet gives us a picture of what some of these soldiers suffered, from other than physical causes, as they stood on guard, when Louis XVIII entered Paris on May 3, 1814:

"It was a regiment of the Old Guard on foot who formed a wall from the Pont Neuf to Notre Dame. . . . I do not think human faces have ever reflected an expression at once so menacing and so terrible. These grenadiers, covered with wounds, conquerors of

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Europe, were forced to salute an old king, invalidated by reason of years, not from wars—spied upon as they were by Russians, Austrians, and Prussians in their own Napoleon's invaded capital. Some of them, their foreheads working, made their large furry cap cover their eyes, that they might not see; others curved the corners of their mouths in the scorn of their anger; others, through their mustaches, showed their teeth like tigers. When they presented arms it was with a movement of fury, and the noise of these rattling arms made one tremble."

These grenadiers, on this memorable November day of the passage up the Seine, some of them, could have been seen trembling from other causes than anger. Out from thatched Normandy farm-houses tottering veterans from Honfleur fields, from Caudebec garden-patches, made their way to the very edges of the Seine banks. Some held their grandsons by the hand, little children brought up on the strong wine of Napoleonic victories, cradled on the fluctuating sway of battles, sung to sleep to songs of victory. With hearts beating to suffocation, the breath as hot on lip as though to rush a charge, these soldiers of Napoleon watched the coming of his bier as a lover might that of his dead mistress.

The straining eyes at last caught sight of the *cortège*.

As on and on the *cortège* moved among the still waters, the cries and shouts that rang up from the

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shores were like unto a continuous song of praise and rapture, from Havre to Courbevoie. There were some among those thousands who were mute. There were the scarred veterans down whose furrowed cheeks the tears were streaming.

Not one of those who stood paying their tribute, by their noisy shouts or by the silent eloquence of their tears, but must have felt oppressed with a sense of something within, stirring their souls, that was at once impressive and intangible; for that which was floating upon the Seine waters was all that was left of a power that had been grandiose and incomplete, an apparition almost fantastic in its comet-like appearance and disappearance, a genius that was touched with the divine ascending flame, but whose soul was racked by an overmastering ambition. Napoleon embodied in himself, as it were, the elements which make the dual mystery—the inequalities of all human life.

CHAPTER XXI

TO THE DOCKS OF ROUEN

I

THE Doric column, with its dulled bronze rings, its blurred bas-reliefs, and the eagle crowning the pillar of stone, had vanished. The moving memories evoked by the commemorative column—erected August 15, 1844—had swept before the mental vision such thoughts and reflections—such a review of France's past grandeur, of all the procession of historic events since that decorative funeral barge passed up the very river-path we were following—that eyes and sense were closed to all nearer objective impressions.

Slowly, gradually, the ever-continuing grandeur of the scene of which we were a part recaptured the wandering mind. The great forests, now lining both sides of the river, reasserted their claim to recognition of their beauty.

The last cobra-like sweep the Seine had taken, from Duclair to La Bouille, turning to compass the curve that led on to Le Val de la Haye, had brought us between the two magnificent forests of Roumare and the forest of Rouvray. So unexpected are these superb hills of trees, so vast their extent, that one

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almost feels them to be a personal possession—one more tie between France and America. The sight of such great forested hills appeals, perhaps, peculiarly to us Americans. We have a proprietary sense of possessing such unmatched glories as the Adirondacks, the Green Mountains, the White Mountains, the Alleghanies, and the Rocky Mountains. To find tracts of land which reveal to the eye forests evocative of a primeval state—adorning a river so little known as a tourist pleasure trip—and to encounter such wildness so near Rouen and Paris—these are the surprises that touch with peculiar appeal an American response to beauty allied to unspoiled nature.

A mass of ruins crowned the hills, just beyond the little hamlet of Le Val de la Haye. Should curiosity tempt you to take a run from Rouen to these imposing and interesting remains of the château-fort—called Le Château de Robert le Diable—for your pains you would have the double reward of attempting to rebuild the superb eleventh-century fortress and you would enjoy an all-embracing view from the great heights of the hill. Undulating mountains, plains, towns, and châteaux—the latter surrounded by their vast parks, would unroll themselves before you—that great carpet of earth's surface on which man has written his longings, desires, and ambitions.

Hamlets and villages, such as Quenneport and Biessart, with their village church spires, their bright roofs, gardens, and grain-fields now disputed, with the

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overhanging forests, their rights to live—these human habitations made brilliant spots of color. Some of the small villas—*parillons*, our French friends would call them—proved they were those dreams that had come true for many a sous-hoarding *petit rentier*. Years of saving, years of unremitting toil, years of hardships borne uncomplainingly, each trim little house we had passed represented; the great object ahead ever kept in view had made the long years pass quickly. To possess just such a bit of land, large enough for a vegetable garden, a small flower garden, a cozy, comfortable house—these possessions, to the smaller bourgeois class, mean the crowning of a life of labor. To retire to such a home, to be a *rentier*, however small the income, are the dreams that haunt the brain of every intelligent, laborious Frenchman. The *dot* system of marriage is one great help; the restriction of the family to one or two offspring is another aider and abettor of a Frenchman's longing to be independent, to enjoy a few years of happy content after life's fever of work and anxiety.

The secret of French thrift, of French industry, of the French love for money find their answer in such hopes and dreams.

To the peasant as well as to the *petit bourgeois*—here is the gift Napoleon gave to the people. In abrogating the law of primogeniture, in forcing all property to be equally divided between heirs, the organizing genius of Napoleon prepared the way for a France universally prosperous and ambitious.

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Lamartine, in company with many others, has not been just to the great man he attacked. The immense reconstructive work of Napoleon, in his consular days, in the earlier years of his imperial career, proves him to rank among the greatest of statesmen. No other French ruler, save Henri IV, has ever had such vision to create a greater France—for the good of the people.

The vine-covered houses had a deeper interest now when one remembered all they stood for. The bright sun shining on the ripened grain, the great potato-patches just now showing their delicate tasseled flower, the long stretches of cabbages and cauliflowers that give to every French landscape such jadelike colors, these prosperous lands spelled the old, the ever-renascent French vigor of energy and industry.

A dazzling white sail, cutting the blues of sky and river, and then more and more sails, steamboats, and every few half-miles a huge transport or foreign ship announced the beginning of the end of our voyage.

Dieppedalle and Quevilly were passed, the former a charming little town full of color and movement. The ships unloading along the river-banks sent long, polychrome shadows across the blues of the Seine. There were violets, reds, and deep purples melting into the liquid surface. Clouds rising from behind the hills would find their soft contours delicately reflected in the river edges. The later afternoon glow

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was tinting the whole landscape with an ineffably vaporous, luminous quality. The hills were long blue ridges of color; the river was a mirror of constantly changing reflections—like the mind of a poet, reflecting only beautiful thoughts.

Tall chimneys pouring dense columns of smoke to darken the sky, succeeded to the spires of parish churches. The scene had changed from one of rustic and natural beauty to one teeming with activity.

We were cruising among the close little islands that precede Rouen's great docks. Noise of thumping, grinding machinery; noise of heavy hammering; noise of men loading and unloading cargoes; noise of puffing steam-engines—the river now choked with ships, sailing-ships, masts splashing the blues of the sky like huge sheets spread out—and everywhere movement, life, activity, and noise—we had indeed returned to our world.

II

In approaching Croisset, a suburb of Rouen, I was curious to see how much of the great industrial and commercial spirit of the age had encroached on Gustave Flaubert's old home. Only a few years ago "the shrine," as the writer's admirers called his house and the charming little Louis XV pavilion where he worked, were as he had last seen them. One could watch, as had he and his beloved mother and niece, from the old house that was at once "gay

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and agreeable," the Seine that seemed framed in a superb tulip-tree, and the charming view across the lawns, with their nodding flowers and *parterres*.

The reverent care with which all the Flaubert souvenirs had been placed and catalogued—the "souvenirs," the manuscripts, the table, the very chair he had used in "those tormenting hours" when Flaubert's toil over his books was, according to his own confessions, rather an agony than a delight—all these precious reminders of this master of style were as sacredly preserved as a devout Catholic enshrines the relics of a saint. One could walk along the terrace, under the lindens—the terrace that ran just above the old house—and follow in imagination that long coil of seven years' toil spun out here that produced the great French masterpiece, *Madame Bovary*.

The long white house was old, as the habitation of a recluse should be. Other monks, dedicated to another worship, had lived here, centuries ago. The monks from the Abbaye of St.-Ouen came here for their summer rest and for healthful recreation. For them also there must be the calm of country life and prolonged hours of silence and reverie.

Flaubert believed it was in this very conventual country house l'Abbé Prévost had written his immortal *Manon Lescaut*, for it was known the abbaye had had as its guest, for several months, the celebrated author.

Flaubert did not work in this interesting old house. The small Louis XV pavilion built directly

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over the river shores was his sanctuary. There his seclusion was as carefully guarded, by his tender and watchful mother, as though she were the guardian angel of a demigod.

"It is time to return to *La Bovary*," he would say, and half the night would be spent in torture torments to find the right word, in chiseling a phrase to greater perfection.

Flaubert's work has filled hundreds of the pages of his critics. Jules Lemaitre applied the revealing searchlight of his penetrative, analytic genius to what he called the psychology of Flaubert's "case"; for there was indeed something abnormal in the methods pursued by Flaubert.

Flaubert, in his search for the right word, brought to the task the same patience and tireless interest of those given over to scientific research. Lemaitre, in his genial, human way of calling things by their right names, wondered if Flaubert, poor and obscure, could have given so much valuable time to the pursuit of perfection? Also whether it was quite honest for a writer to count all the hours he spent lying on his lounge, smoking a cigarette, lolling out of a window "as hours spent in search of a word"?

"I find it difficult to comprehend how one could devote eight days and eight nights to the writing of fifty or sixty lines.

"This degree of difficulty in writing appears to me unnatural. In fact, I have doubts. Above all, I doubt when I reflect with what ease Flaubert wrote

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to his friends letters of twenty pages, in a morning, letters that prove really a very elaborate style.

"In truth, he was an idler, perhaps very lazy in spite of all one says. To stroll about his vast library, going from one book to another, to lounge on his divan, smoking innumerable little clay pipes, while thinking vaguely about his page, first begun, in ruminating over phrases—such was his conception, probably, of 'working like a nigger.'"¹

The little pavilion finally came into sight. What a pathetic picture of desolation it presented! The huge factory had encroached on "the gay and agreeable" old house. It seemed to have been engulfed in the modern monstrosity. Where were the pretty lawns, the flower-beds, and the trees of the long terrace? The *tulipier superbe*, the house, the gardens were lost forever.

Flaubert's temple remains. The famous terrace above the little house, where the writer and his friends met, where he walked daily, where later, after his death, his friends, received by Louis Bouilhet, his *alter ego*—would meet annually to commemorate the anniversary of his birth—the somewhat sickly trees of the terrace could scarcely be seen.

This desiccation of a literary shrine by the rage of commercialism seems significant. We are living in a world perpetually at war: the battle between idealism and materialism is waged at our very doors. What is to remain? Are we come to the

¹ Jules Lemaitre, *Les Contemporains Huitieme Série, Mes Souvenirs*.

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days when one must enter a convent to be sure of securing quiet, calm—and where also one entombs one's fame? Modern writers, I take it, have also been bitten by the rabies of commercialism. What writer now writes for the sole glory of art? What lover of to-day would write to his beloved, as Flaubert did to Louise Colet:

“Va—aime plutôt l'art que moi; cette affection-là ne te manquera pas. . . . Adore l'idole, elle seule est vraie parce qu'elle seule est éternelle.”

Read any life of Flaubert and you will be the better able to appreciate the changes which the war has brought to the Seine shores.

Rouen itself in war-time discovered its importance as the second northern French port. There were times indeed when Havre feared her claims to being the first of the great northern ports might be denied. Rouen's docks were congested for long miles out into the Seine; war-vessels of every type and style were ranged in deep rows along her shores. To pass between them, as I had the privilege accorded me, by the Havre commandant in September, 1918, was like passing in review of a world's fleet. The sight was one never to be forgotten. It was a stupendous proof of the victory won by England's supremacy of the sea.

As our boat now pushed on and on in this year of victory the river shores still showed what the Allied nations had been taught of the uses of the Seine as a great highway and of the value of Rouen as a port. Hundreds of great ships disputed anchorage with

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canal-boats, sailing-craft, steam-tugs, and torpedo-boats.

The Seine has come indeed into her own. The Thames alone is her European rival from the point of view of maritime activity.

There were tootings, signaling, whistles were blown, great hawsers were thrown, and the Havre boat had come to its Rouen docks.

Our inland voyage was over.

The vision of the beauty revealed, of France's prosperity and of her grandeur, were but the prophetic vision of all she would achieve in the centuries to come.

CHAPTER XXII

ROUEN—SEEN IN A DAY

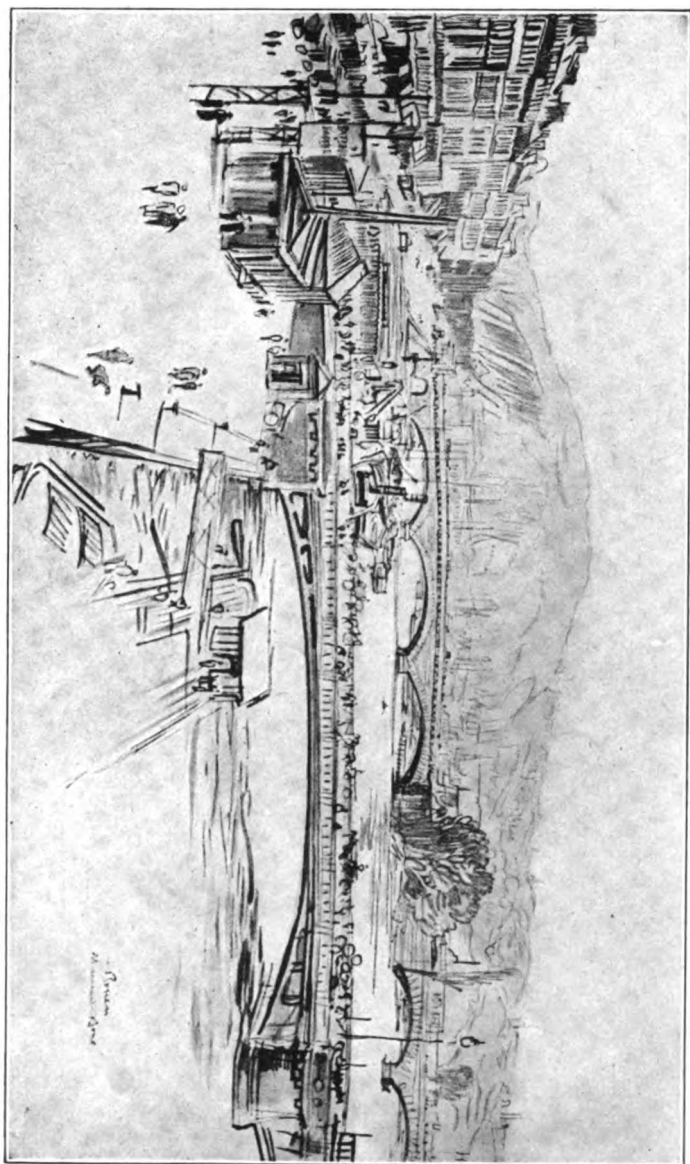
I

THE grinding of cranes, the smell of tar, the aromatic odors of grain, of dried fish, of oils in barrels, the slouching figures of longshoremen, of Chinese coolies handling boxes, and of negroes shoveling coal from barges to crates—here were the proofs that we had indeed returned to the great world.

Rouen's docks proclaimed her place among the more important ports of the world. Her forces of after-the-war activities, as we have seen, reach out miles beyond her actual quays. This long stretch of a river-packed shore with its massed shipping might be New York's crowded docks, or those of the Thames or the Clyde. All great ports have a family likeness. Commerce presents the same hard-lined face the world over.

Rouen is now transformed. She is the modern city; the tram-cars rattling along the broad boulevard yonder, the rushing cars, the network of telegraph poles, tell you she is the sister city of all the live cities of our teeming world.

VIEW OF THE QUAY AT ROUEN



ROUEN—SEEN IN A DAY

And yet—and yet—as one approaches the much-loved, much-lauded city there is seen from the river one sign, rising skyward, that proclaims Rouen holds fast to the jewels in her antique crown of beauty.

Like a giant arrow aimed to touch the skies, the great cathedral lantern-spire rivals the uprising hills. The towering mass of the cathedral itself o'ertops the gray mass of the city roofs and closely packed houses, as its grandeur and beauty now stand almost unrivaled since Rheims must take its widowed place among the great ruins of antiquity.

It was this first, overpowering spectacle of Rouen's cathedral, set like a monster jewel below the uprising hills, hills that seemed earth's protective guardianship of this Rouennais treasure, that fixed and entranced the seeing eye and sense.

As we hurried along the crowded, bustling streets, the shock of the city's ultra-modernity would have had its benumbing, dampering effect did we not know Rouen's great architectural glories are religiously preserved; that through the glaring monstrosities of electrical signs, music-hall advertisements, shops showing every variety of merchandise, and open-air restaurants with the blare of their gramophone, negro choruses, and jazz music filling the streets, one could still rebuild the old, superb medieval and Renaissance Rouen. For there are still dark and tortuous streets; there are still image-sculptured houses, with their gable roofs and quaint dormer windows; there are still slimy alleys, beyond whose tottering, grimy-faced houses you may

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catch the lace-worked apse of a noble Gothic church; and of churches, of every age since churches were built in this Norman capital, there are enough to delight the lovers of architecture for days and days.

For us, alas! there was to be but a single day in which to review the glories of this city of churches and of Joan of Arc.

We were due at Amiens, to begin the tour of the more northern devastated regions on the morrow.

Was it loss or gain—this enforced, hurried survey of Rouen's treasures and beauties? With quickened vision comes keener-edged impressions. Never before, in more leisurely wanderings, had the architectural and historical records of Rouen's long life as a city produced as lasting, as perdurable an effect.

In this rapid survey, a charm indefinable, but one replete with a peculiar suggestive quality, seemed to haunt every step of our pilgrimage. We were in pursuit of the city Charles VII saw when he made his triumphal entry, in great state and magnificence, after Talbot's unsuccessful attempts to hold the great Norman capital Henry V of England had conquered.

The city Charles VII would have seen was the city of the Middle Ages. Its narrow, tortuous streets were lined with wooden houses whose sculptured façades and irregular outlines made those rich contrasts in tones and line we moderns, in making a cult of the picturesque, seek far and wide.

The smells and odors of that medieval city could be distinguished a full league away—and this far-

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reaching breath was still to be breathed as late as the beginning of the eighteenth century. Filth and undrained streets in this walled town brought about such a succession of death-dealing diseases, of plagues, and of pests as only a tough, Norman-peopled city could survive.¹

Tapestries, brocades, Oriental carpets, standards and flags, magnificent costumes and jewels, and the sonorous brasses of trumpets and silver-tongued flutes were the decorative and martial elements which could turn a filthy medieval city into a banquet for the eyes—one which, for all our modern inventions, our drain-pipes, and the pride we take in our plumbing, we can never hope to rival.

The late kings who came to Rouen on their way to Havre or to the Normandy coast—Henri II among others, with Diane de Poitiers sitting beside him—pillion fashion, the two making the tour of the city on the occasion of Henri II's memorable visit, when Rouen outdid itself to celebrate so great an honor as its king's honoring of his *amie*—these royal visitors would have seen the city in its Renaissance splendor. The great changes made in the last hundred years have been the leveling of the city walls, its moats turned into boulevards, its draw-bridges, great gateways, and the marvels of its animated, sculptured houses torn down. The loss of these latter can never be sufficiently mourned, for the Rouen of not more than fifty years ago was still a city of rare, unique streets, adorned with houses

¹ *Vieux Rouen.*

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so exquisitely carved one could wish each one had been preserved under glass.

II

Whether one passes now under the gilded archway of La Grosse Horloge into the busiest of all the Rouen streets—its true artery—the great clock having given its name to the street; whether one pushes one's way through the throng of pedestrians who at all hours of the day and night crowd the too narrow thoroughfare; or whether one takes the short cut through streets running from the rue Jeanne d'Arc—one's feet turn, as though magnet-drawn, to the great cathedral.

For us there could be but the brief glancing tribute of renewed wonder at those contrasting architectural styles in the superb façade which endow it with a character unique among great French ecclesiastical masterpieces.

The Romanesque base of the Tower of St.-Romain flowering into the ogival upper structure—this tower being the sole survivor of the original cathedral of the thirteenth century (1200) consumed by fire—the simplicity and solidity of this uprising tower enhance the florescent delicacy of the Tour de Beurre.

For close study of the famous sculptures on the porches, the laces of the Gothic balustrades, pinnacles, statues, niches, and flying-buttresses, for an inspection of the interesting variety of design in the

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many windows, one must have at one's disposal days, even weeks, not hours.

One view I could not forgo. Passing into the rue St.-Romain and turning to the right, one comes upon the full majestic mass of the cathedral's great apse, the transepts, the upspringing flying-buttresses, the crown of the Tour de Beurre, and the flight heavenward of the tapering, the incredibly tall lantern. From no other point of view can the imposing ensemble of the grandeur of the cathedral be thus grasped. Not even Chartres can present so wonder-filling a presentment of stones piled on stones, curved in lines of harmonious beauty, carved as though by magic-endowed fingers, and with that aspiring spiral of the great lantern that typifies the living faith that built this Gothic masterpiece.

III

Down the rue St.-Romain, as you walk, you come upon one of the famous "views" so often reproduced by etchers and painters.

The street is narrow; there are agreeably overhanging eaves of old houses; there are certain odors that prick the fancy to rebuild the older, smelly Rouen; and at the end of the short street, in perfect perspective, there stands the jewel of the church all the world knows as St.-Maclou. The breath quickens; the Rouen of a far-away, lost century is before one.

That first ecstatic vision pursues one. Whether

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one stands before the elaborate triple porch, the eye carried on and on, and up and up, from the laces of the pediment to the statues, from the statues to the faery grace of the cock-crowned stone spire; whether one pauses before the door Jean Goujon carved, or, on entering the church, whether one eyes the tower that becomes a lantern in the interior of the church, "a Norman feature," or whether one follows the winding curves of the celebrated stairway leading to the organ-loft, or whether one tarries before the jeweled stained-glass windows—no view of St.-Maclou's architectural or ornamental glories can outdo that first view from the narrow St.-Romain street.

What other French town or city can yield as does Rouen such Old World groupings of picturesque streets, old houses, and Gothic and Renaissance architectural achievements?

IV

After an hour of craning one's neck to follow the older Christian world's effort to carry the symbols of its faith to the very portals of the skies, it was with a common impulse we turned our feet to the open square before St.-Ouen.

In England the bit of garden at the side of the church would be called a cathedral close.

A true garden, however, we found it. There were flaming flower-beds, elm and pine trees, and smooth, well-kept lawns. There were also inviting benches

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where, also as usual, one could not hope to find a seat. One may live in France for a lifetime, yet the secret of how it comes that so many well-dressed loungers and so many girls and middle-aged women find time to pass hours sitting on a bench in a square or garden, watching the passers-by as though they had taken seats at a show—this secret will never be revealed.

As we sat watching, in our turn, the laughing, romping groups of children at play in the garden paths, a certain statue caught the eye.

Above its pedestal, the figure, clad in a short tunic, had an arresting, authoritative air. Curiosity spurred one to learn the motive of the imperious gesture of the right arm and forefinger pointing downward with an air of possessorship.

The inscription on the pedestal gave us the secret of that autocratic pose. For a true conqueror was Rollo—pirate chief of Norman invaders—he whose ruse and cunning forced the French King Charles VI to give him this rich land of Normandy (Neustria) with Rouen as its capital. "This land over which I rule—I keep," reads the inscription on the column. And keep it and rule it indeed did Rollo and all of his imperious descendants.

Was there ever such a story as that of those adventurous Normans? Will there ever be another as romantic, as wonderful as the turning of pirates into the thriftiest, the most law-abiding of French citizens?

When out from the glacial fjords the vikings set

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forth on their great adventures to seek *their* "place in the sun"; when they pushed their high-prowed boats up through the verdant reaches of the Seine; when their envious eyes, weary of gray skies, of fog-cloaked mountains, of icy climates, feasted on the magnificent river, its shores tapestried with fruit-trees in blossom, its fertile fields the home of fat cattle, its banks lined with snug farms and peopled villages; with its churches dedicated to a mighty, unknown God; with convents as big as towns, gorged with riches—what wonder these adventurers, these ferocious warriors, these men of giant stature and will of iron, fought, pillaged, laid waste the land they determined to win as theirs or die?

The French king finally ceded Neustria—the great Normandy of our day—to Rollo or Rou—William's ancestor—the most politic of all those dreaded Northmen who had sailed up the "Route des Cygnes," their ivory horns sounding their dread approach.

Rollo had decided to settle himself in Rouen.

He and his band of greedy followers were to go home no longer to the icy, northern winters. Rollo, invading these French lands after the manner of his people, by simply establishing himself in Rouen, had forced the king's hand. Of a dangerous, powerful, ferocious invader, Charles the Simple—not so simple as his name—was to make a subject and a convert. Rollo became the "man" of the French king; he ruled Normandy (Neustria) as its Christianized duke; he wedded the king's daughter as he had

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accepted baptism, as the accepted price for both submission as vassal and son-in-law and as a son of the Church whose rich abbeys he was now to rule, after having despoiled them.

All the world knows what the Normans made of Normandy. These wild-haired, fierce-eyed, semi-savage Northmen were first of all to submit to a greater power than even the rule of iron law established by their great chief; they were to be subdued by climate. The temperate airs, the soft, suave coloring of the Seine shores, the constant humidity of the soil were to play upon nerves and hardy muscles. The ferocious Northman was to become the Frenchified Norman. Not so thoroughly Frenchified as to obliterate all trace, however, of the intrepid and colder-veined viking. So persistent have been the Norman traits, the Norman characteristics, that even to-day, after a thousand years of occupation, even by Frenchmen Normandy is considered as having a semi-national character. One speaks of "going down into Normandy" as one would never think of thus specializing a trip to any other French province save Brittany.

Habits of northern frugality; distrust of one's neighbors, of strangers; of a passion for litigation (the survival of the old fighting spirit); of a passionate devotion to industry; and a tribal preference for living strictly *en famille*—here you have the distinguishing Norman traits.

The Frenchman's gaiety, his expansiveness, his making of the pursuit of pleasure an industry—you

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look in vain in serious Normandy for these French attributes. The art of Flaubert, of Guy de Maupassant is an art veiled with the sad, somber, gray mists of the Norman skies.

Here in Rouen little is left of the old Norman city save its famous cathedral and those churches whose beauty would make the fame of any city.

The Renaissance with Francis I gave to Rouen's civic buildings imperishable splendor.

V

It was on the little green bench in the garden we decided what we must sacrifice, and what could still be seen of this Rouen treasure city in the few hours remaining to us.

A further tour of the dozen or more interesting churches must be abandoned; neither could we hope to follow the calvary Joan of Arc trod from her imprisonment to her burning at the stake in Le Vieux Marché; the glories of the Hôtel de Ville, of the unsurpassable Palais de Justice, must await a more lengthened stay; and the museum, with its wealth of gathered treasures from every part of Normandy, must be a memory.

For once, indeed, the glories of Rouen must suffer an eclipse. The modern rush, the fever of getting on, was hurrying my friend to quickened speed.

The day had been a day of all others in which swiftly to review the wonderful city. The golden weather that had followed us—a celestial benedic-

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tion—was even now turning every Rouen street, every church façade, and every sculptured house and palace into an illumined shrine.

We had also been lucky in the day itself. It was Sunday.

There was, therefore, all the more hope of hearing a certain bell, one we decided we must hear, and later two little chapels must be visited—that, by the merest and happiest chance, I had heard spoken of as practically unknown to travelers, the charming *chanoine* of the cathedral of Rouen assuring me I should be rewarded for my search, when he spoke of their interest.

VI

In true devout, pilgrim fashion, therefore, we had bent our steps to this apsidal garden of St.-Ouen. The warm air was still in its Sabbath calm. And then suddenly the silence was startled by the chiming of the bells of the church. The vergers were ringing for high mass.

There was no mistaking the tonal quality of Jumièges's great bell.¹ Its deep, sonorous voice rose above all other of the bells' chiming. Its sweetness and depth of tone had a solemn, awesome richness, as though from the tragic experience of its life history it brought the warning of the passing away of all earthly grandeur.

One would have liked to talk back, to answer:

¹ The great bell of Jumièges Abbaye had been taken to Rouen and hung among the bells of St.-Ouen.

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"Life is short, every life is incomplete, each human effort can only give half of its true force, but as the minute insects that built up the white faces of the chalk cliffs lining the Seine must have taken a million of years to make firm, by their shells, a single inch, so have great men's lives handed on to us the firm foundations of the civilizing powers we have fought for. Jumièges carried on its civilizing power—"

"You are getting didactic," smoothly remarked my friend. "Let us go into the church. Where is the little chapel we were to seek?"

Out from the garden I meekly followed. We passed into the nave's lofty interior. The burning question arose—could we at this moment visit the curious chapel of which we were in search? Were many worshipers assembled such a demand could not even be breathed. The great church was empty. In a distant side-chapel, twinkling tapers and the murmur of a priest's voice announced a low mass was being said. Still we hesitated. An obliging sacristan came to our rescue.

"Yes, Mesdames, I can show you the chapel; so few ask for it, it is a pleasure to show it."

With the professional air of those whose lives are spent in church services of a strictly lay order, the sacristan extracted a slender taper from one side-pocket and a box of matches from another.

We followed him to a side-chapel beyond the choir. A crimson curtain was lifted, and behold us in between thick walls, descending narrow, steep,

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stone steps. The quick transition from the lofty, gray interior of one of the most perfect of Gothic churches to this survival of the primitive buildings, was instantaneous. Down and down we went, breathing an air vaultlike in its humidity. We were in sepulchral darkness; suddenly the twinkling taper was held above our heads. We had come to a stop.

"You are in the oldest church in Normandy. Here in this chapel Catholicism was born."

This astounding announcement was made in a tone of voice that carried immediate conviction. Disputatious argument might come later. At the moment the rude vaulting, the stone benches, the primitive altar, the two little clefts in the walls serving as sacristies, were undeniable proofs of the underground chapel having been built for secrecy, for few worshipers, and for religious services of the most abbreviated order.

To discover so primitive a relic under the floors of the finished perfection of St.-Ouen was perhaps the really, the chief, the truly sensational impression created.

VII

The sweet garden scents of the open square followed us to the car. We rolled on to a height above the city. We were in quest of another discovery. On turning from La Place Cauchoise to the street of St.-Gervais we seemed to be entering into country sights and country life.

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On this St.-Gervais height the air was singularly pure and soft. Houses set about with gardens, in which tall shrubs and trees threw shadows upon green lawns and garden plots—how far away were Rouen's bustling, teeming streets! There was a wide expanse of cloudlit blues above; and below, wandering with rustic uncertainty, were streets skipping downward with a tentative air.

The scene was set in so rural a frame, it was no surprise to see sitting under the trees, in the open square below the church, two old gossips, in caps. A priest stepped down from the church's side entrance. He stopped, gazed about him, and then he took his seat beside the old cronies.

Once within the church, we found high mass was over. The sacristan came forward, and again our request found favor in his eyes.

Once again we were startled to find how cleverly the church hides its secrets. An innocent-looking panel was opened. A dark flight of worn steps led us downward. Again the same dead air choked us. Once more our stumbling feet came to a rest in a darkness that showed us nothing but a small, dim, stony interior.

The taper hovered over a niched slab. This we were told was the tomb of St.-Mellon (311), he who came from England, in the fourth century, and who brought the worship of Christ and the Virgin to Rouen. St.-Mellon was the first Bishop of Rouen.

The taper threw its uncertain light on another

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niched slab. This was the tomb of St.-Mellon's successor, Avitien, who died in A.D. 325.

These dates seemed to be proved as exact by the rudeness of chapel and tombs. There were absorbingly interesting remains of that remote century work; the stones of which the walls were built seemed to have been thrown into the cement, scarcely an attempt having been made to place them, to give them security. The capitals of the rough pillars were hewn, apparently, rather with an ax than with the chisel. The primitive altar, the sacristy, the worn stone benches, must have been of the same age as the chapel of St.-Ouen.

It is certain that even though these two chapels may have been somewhat renovated during the Middle Ages, their early fourth-century creation can be no fable. Paganism was still the cult of the country Cæsar had conquered. Beautiful temples to Venus, to Bacchus, and to all the pagan gods abounded throughout Gaul; the lovely Cyprian Queen of Love, of the Graces, was devoutly worshipped two or three centuries after the Romans were gone. It is a grave question, indeed, whether the worship of Venus has ever entirely ceased in this land of Latinized Frenchmen.

Our amiable guide, meanwhile, was telling us of a reverent tribute paid yearly, in this very chapel, to the memory of its first bishop. High mass is said on the anniversary of St.-Mellon's death. The dark night of the chapel is illumined by torches and by hundreds of tapers. The antique altar disappears

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under its garlands of flowers and laces. The priests, to prove their devotion to their pious founder, bring their vestments down from the upper sacristy and don them here, before the rude little openings in the wall—the older sacristies. And in those ancient niches the costly gold vessels used in the service of the mass are placed.

One easily pictures the touching scene. The favored few worshippers—for at most the chapel can barely hold fifty or sixty persons—these devout worshippers must sit about on the stone benches, many kneeling. The priests in their embroidered chasubles and in their laces; the gleaming gold vessels, the choir-boys' scarlets, the high lights of the scene; and then the play of the lights on the rude background, now lighting up the delicate face of a woman or the roughened wall-surface; and, falling on the embroideries of the priestly vestments, the glow of the gleaming gold, of the brilliant colors that must make a second lighting about the altar—one can readily evoke the touching and moving ceremony, at once so splendid and so rude!

The mental vision was still dancing before the eyes as I made my way to the open doors of the church. One's eyes blinked at the noon sun's shining. And the soft warm air was good to feel on one's cheeks and brow.

Centuries ago, I suddenly remembered, the same soft, cool air was found to be good, by one of the great of earth. He had been borne here, in a litter, from a long distance. He came here to die.

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And then the vision of that slow, agonizing death and the harrowing story of the Conqueror's funeral came upon me like a true vision. I saw it. I felt it—standing there where he had passed beyond the gates of death—where none could do him harm.

And this is what I saw:

CHAPTER XXIII

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR'S LAST JOURNEY

I

IN the golden month of September, in the year 1087, there set forth, from out the quays of Rouen, down the Seine, on as lonely a journey as a body bereft of its soul has ever taken, all that earth could claim of William, Duke of Normandy, Conqueror and King of England.

The long barge on which the coffin was placed, it is recorded, was decked with a certain splendor. If the old chroniclers who described these last honors paid to the greatest man of his time drew on their imagination for effective, decorative adjuncts, at least the picture they paint accords in every particular with the dramatic story of William's last, and perhaps the most cruel, of his battles.

The Shakespearian tragedy of his death followed fast upon the accident that befell him during the fray.

The French king, ever envious of William's power, of his rich Norman lands, and of the duke's genius of organization which had made Normandy (Neustria) the most valuable, as it was even then the most prosperous, of all the lands in France, was tempted

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to make a cruel jest as the Conqueror lay ill in bed at Rouen. William's great fame had taken on huge proportions during his later years. Taunting his enemy and his unwieldy shape, Philip of France laughed loud as he cried:

"King William has as long a lying-in as a woman behind her curtains."

"When I get up, par la splendeur de Dieu"—William swore by his favorite oath—"I will go to mass in Philip's land and bring a rich offering for my churching. I will offer a thousand candles for my fee. Flaming brands shall they be, and steel shall glitter over the fire they make."

There had been border wars between Philip's land of Vexin, of which Mantes was the capital, and William's Normandy. William had wearied of these unceasing French inroads; in his imperious way he demanded the surrender of all Vexin. Now this insult of his king, in answer to that demand, hurled at the most sensitive point, save one, in the great man's make-up—for mockery leveled at any personal defect or at his illegitimate birth was the *point faible* in William's character—this taunt had stung him to the pitch of cruel anger.

As soon as he was physically able William proceeded to light those "candles," and flaming brands indeed they were!

All along the lovely country you now may see, as did William, riding at the head of his great army, between Rouen and Mantes—orchards heavy with fruit, harvests garnered or ripe for the sickle, and

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farms rich in flocks and cattle—the whole set, now as then, in an emerald frame of plains, of low hills, and of sunlit forests. Through this charming land William and his army rode on and on.

The quiet town you now pass, on your journey into Normandy, whose decorative cathedral towers you see planted, as it were, against the wide skies, from across the plains, seems to have little or no historical story to tell the world. The silent streets, the modern façades, the town's provincial air of easy leisure, appear to hold no secret of a dramatic past.

The very air and atmosphere of "Mantes la Jolie" refuse to yield those secrets of tone, of color surprises, that give imagination a lift. The only possible beauty you will find in the commonplace little city you must seek outside of its brightly sunned but uninteresting streets.

The town William and his army entered, in that golden September month of the year 1087, was the typical town of the Middle Ages: the town of low, thatched houses, of their rush-laid floors; of their glassless windows; of mud and refuse-strewn streets; of here and there a fine Norman-arched church to prove the distance, in point of comfort and splendor, between God's domain and man's, and of convents and monasteries whose dependencies filled half the town.

Vexin, as it was then called, of which Mantes was the capital, was the natural frontier between France and Normandy. The French king of that far-away day was as uneasy, seated on his throne, as have

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been some of the rulers of kingdoms in our own day.

A full third part of the whole wealth of France lay within the boundaries of Normandy. The fat plains; the golden grain-fields; the great orchards tapestried with the crimsons, the purples, and the yellows of the fortune-yielding fruit-trees; the promenading cattle; the droves of sheep—here were the earth-yielding proofs of great riches. Shipbuilding, cotton-spinning, armories, and how many other industries attested the fecund vitality of this Normandy's pliable force!

To look on such riches, and not to burn to know them to be Norman, in this year of 1087, and not French, was to endow a French king with super-human virtues of continence.

Therefore it was that again, as in so many other futile attacks, the French king came to make war on William his vassal, as duke of over-prosperous Normandy, and also his "dear brother," as King of England. Such courteous ties are easily forgotten, however, when human passions pull a stronger string.

II

As William and his army moved out from Rouen, to meet his envious king, as on and on he went, the Conqueror made good his ruthless boast. Flaming hayricks, burning forests, lighted his army's night-watches. Mantes itself was reserved for one of his few acts of wanton cruelty. The town was reduced

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to ashes; not even the churches were spared, and yet William was a lover of churches.

Riding through the burning streets, "the heat of the season, and the great fire of the city, to which latter the ardor of his vengeance made him go too closely, in order that his orders might be the better executed, (these) caused so sudden an alteration in his health that, no longer able to remain in the air, he turned to take the road to his headquarters. Forcing his horse to jump a ditch, he struck so violently against the pommel of the saddle that it engendered a fever."¹

This false step of his steed seemed to his enemies the just vengeance of an outraged Providence. It was, for William, the beginning of the end.

Wounded unto death, he was carried in his litter back across the very country he had so ruthlessly harried. Both the journey and his illness were long. There was time, during the three weeks of his suffering at the Priory of St.-Gervais, close to Rouen, for dwelling on all the complications, on all the disasters so keen and great a mind as William's could not fail to foresee would follow on his losing his grasp of his two great possessions—Normandy and England.

What dark and fateful shapes peopled that death-chamber! His half-brothers, sons of his mother's by her only rightful husband, Comte d'Herluin of Conteville, these great lords William knew to be as dangerous to any people over whom they might reign as they had been traitorous to him. Odo was Bishop

¹ L'Abbé Prévost, *Histoire de Guillaume*, p. 507.

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of Bayeux, had been Regent of England, and was Count of Kent. Imprisoned at the time of William's death, he was released to return to Normandy. He it was who was to paint, for all time, the marvelous record of the Invasion of England, as well as the true picture of the Normans of his day, in the famous Tapestry of Bayeux.

As for his sons, how could any father think of those ungrateful, grasping, unnatural sons save as a strong man faces treachery under the gathering gloom of full knowledge of their desertion?

Mathilda, his beloved wife, had died five years previous, in 1083. Her body lay in the great choir of her own superb abbey, l'Abbaye des Dames, at Caen, the penance imposed by the Pope for the unsanctioned marriage of one of the few perfect unions known in history.

Loneliest of dying monarchs, therefore, could even the great deeds of his double reign console the Conqueror? Could the rule of peace, of orderly government, of wise laws that had made Normandy a model state warm the heart of a man as abandoned, as desolate as was William? The wife of his tenderest as of his later years, Mathilda, lay in her tomb at Caen, where one was already being made for him. Of his three sons not one was here, among this sorrowing company of monks, of courtiers, of priests and prelates, to help him die. There was not one of his children to give him the comforting warmth of filial affection.

Our acts come back, at certain tragic hours, to

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hand us, as though in mockery, the blighted fruit of our own seeding. William was not unlike many another modern father. It had been his policy to keep his sons dependent on him. He enriched his barons, had given lavishly to his own half-brothers, but neither in England nor in Normandy were lands or spoils dealt out to his sons. In the coarse but picturesque language characteristic of this man of few words and great deeds, when besieged by the altogether natural, if somewhat importunate, demands of one of his sons for a larger share in the wealth that was being so liberally bestowed on others, William answered:

“It is not my manner to take off my clothes till I go to bed.”

His sons, therefore, at this time, when even the strongest and most self-reliant of men stand most in need of affection, of feeling that the darkness closing in upon them is lighted by the tender flame of love—William’s sons had fled. Their quarrels were even now filling the startled air, an air tremulous with fears of unknown danger.

All England, all Normandy knew the great sun was setting. Already England and Normandy were stirred to quivering anxiety of what was to befall, once the strong hand of the Conqueror was struck down.

During the long weeks of his suffering William had time for settling the graver affairs of his kingdom. Certain portions of William’s personal wealth were wisely divided among his ungrateful heirs. The crown of Normandy was given to his eldest son,

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Robert. The awarding of the legacy of England's crown even William's master mind found too great a perplexity. He relegated the choice of his successor as king of England to the man whom, above all others, after his beloved Mathilda and the children he best loved—to Lanfranc. In this former brilliant Italian lawyer; in this founder of the Avranches lectures; in this repentant scholar who took his vows as monk of the great Abbaye of Bec; in this first abbot of William's own great church at Caen, of St.-Etienne—in Lanfranc, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, William had found that rarest of treasures in his kingdom—a true friend and wise counselor. William the Red, the Conqueror's second son, was already in England, to persuade Lanfranc to secure to him England's crown.

William had not only delighted in the building of churches; he not only had passed to the clergy some of the greatest benefices that were his to give; he not only had endowed convents and monasteries as other kings enrich favorites—he was himself a true son of the Church, a lover of God and of holy men. Were not the saintly Anselm, now abbot of the Abbaye of Bec, and Lanfranc—were not these good, wise men his only, his sole intimates? What a light such friendships cast on the nature of the man whose life was passed in the heady passions of battles, of conquests, of the organizing of great kingdoms, and in the ruling of two races as utterly at variance as were his own turbulent and arrogant Normans and the proud and rebellious Britons!

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After having also made liberal provision for the poor, as he lay on his couch at the Priory of St.-Gervais, William prepared himself for the dread hour. Great men meet death for the most part with a grand air. Cæsar, as he fell at the base of Pompey's statue, could remember to cover his face with his mantle, lest his murderers might see his features tortured by the death agony. The same grave concern for decency, for making the final exit with the grace of dignity, inspires, I believe, all the greater minds to meet death with a courage we call Spartan or Christian, according to the era of a hero's epoch or to the character of his philosophy or creed.

The shadows were now gathering thick about the master mind of Europe. The scene the old chroniclers paint for us of the Conqueror's death-bed is one that may conceivably have been arranged to impress the popular mind. Yet the broad outlines agree with all the more authentic estimates of William's character. He was surrounded by prelates, by priests, and by monks, we are told. In the quiet and retirement of the distant priory, Rouen's busy roar of life was dulled. Amid trees and verdure a quiet air helped a soul to mount to serener heights.

One morning, at the hour of prime, William awoke, to hear the great bell of the cathedral at Rouen ringing its clangorous chimes. As though he had never before heard this music swinging in midair, he asked what it might mean. On being told by his attendants the bells were being rung for matins,

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William lifted his eyes and hands heavenward as he said a brief prayer. He breathed again, and was dead.

III

It is our convenient habit to sum up certain tragic situations as Shakespearian. But Shakespeare himself sought his scenes and characters in records of life and history.

In this death of William and of all that followed there were sufficient elements of drama and of tragedy to furnish genius with the *mise-en-scène* of half a dozen historical plays.

The recital of the panic that seized on all the prelates and ecclesiastics who had swarmed about the Conqueror's death-bed as hungry sharks about a victim—the richer among them mounting their steeds, those who must walk hurrying away to look after their possessions as though menaced by an advancing enemy; the pillaging of the priory, that had been one of the châteaux of former Norman dukes, of all valuables, of even linen and furniture as well as of all its silver and ornaments—what a scene for a painter of words!

In the chamber where he died William's body, even that poor débris of power lay, stripped, naked, and deserted.

In Rouen itself and beyond the city the panic, meanwhile, had spread to every inhabitant. It seemed as though all Normandy were possessed with an access of folly. Many left town, carrying with

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them all portable valuables. Others hid all that could be secreted. The fear of a coming revolution was in every one's mind.

No greater proof could be given of the power wielded by William, of his firm control over his Norman subjects, and of his rule of justice and orderly government, than the panic of fear and dismay in which his death had plunged his dukedom.

A single knight, Herluin of Conteville, kept control of both head and heart. Years ago William had "righted his mother." That romance of his father's courting of Arlette, the tanner's daughter, by the fountain at Falaise, the fountain that lay below Robert's great castle, was never viewed in the light of romance by the proud and supersensitive offspring of that love adventure. One of the first authoritative acts of William the Bastard had been to give his mother, Arlette, a husband—a marriage blessed by a priest.

Robert the Magnificent—or the Devil—both sobriquets, but the better paint the large unruly nature of the man—Robert, father of William, had died in far distant Eastern lands, lands which, from the point of view of the eleventh century, seemed to be earth's terminus.

The mad longing to reach Jerusalem having been satisfied, the fate of so many other thousands of crusaders had met Robert on the return journey. He had died emitting a last racy jest to be carried down the centuries. "Tell my people," he had laughed out to some of his subjects as he lay in his

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litter, who asked what message they should deliver to his Normans—"tell my people you saw me carried to heaven by four Saracen heathen."

Arlette, therefore, being, if not a wedded wife, at least free, could wed.

It was her husband, Herluin, one of the few courtiers about the king, who was to prove his gratitude for the double gift of a fair and lovely wife, and for all the riches his great son-in-law had bestowed on him and his. William's body might have lain there unshrouded—who knows?—unburied, such were the disorders of those wild days, had not Herluin proved he had a heart.

"However, the body of the king would have remained without burial if a simple nobleman named Herluin, pushed," says the Norman historian, "by his natural goodness and to perform an act agreeable to God, as well as to save the honor of the nation, had not taken upon himself the care of the funeral." Such a record proves the simplicity of the times, as well as the illuminating fact that while William could bring law and order out of chaos, could, by his long reign of justice and enterprise, develop and insure prosperity, he had not organized his court. France itself must indeed await the advent of François I for a true court to be formed.

Herluin planned his great benefactor's funeral on a scale commensurate with kingly state. First, the frightened ecclesiastics must be brought back to the priory, from Rouen, to participate in the last offices of the dead. Both exhortations as well as

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rich offerings were necessary to gather together these unworthy sons of the Church.

A procession finally set out from Rouen with the Archbishop of Rouen, under his dais, at their head. This latter notability, having been paid to remember what should have been his first thought both as man and priest, bethought him of a means of placing the corpse where it might not be a too frequent reminder of benefits forgot. The archbishop ordained William's body should be taken to Caen, there to be entombed in his own church of St.-Etienne.

The mortal part of William, therefore, was now made ready for its last voyage. Herluin made his preparations on a scale suitable with the grandeur of a reign that had lasted forty-two years. The barge, we are told, was broad and long, for William was a large man, and as tall as had been his viking forefathers. The casket was placed where all could see.

All Normandy who could crowd the banks of the Seine lined the shores. If the news of the great duke's and king's death could be transmitted, presumably by hill-fires, to Sicily in a single day,¹ the knowledge that his funeral rites were to be as none other monarchs had ever been must have flown to every hamlet and thatched cottage, to town and castle, for wide miles behind the green Seine banks.

Out from the crowded Rouen quays the barge slipped into the shining waters. The September sun lit up a scene which no man who looked upon it

¹ Freeman, *History of Normandy*.

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would ever look upon the like again, nor would his children's children be allowed to forget the sight.

Under its purple-and-crimson pall there lay the broad, long coffin. The two crowns of Normandy and of England are said to have rested above the head that had worn both so nobly. Were the scepters also beside him? Yet of what avail such insignia of royalty? The mighty hand was nerveless, that hand before whose strength of blow no man could stand, whose bow no man could bend.

Thus, in royal state, did William set forth on his last journey.

Once beyond the close islands about Rouen, the barge and its burden took their slow way between the long Seine reaches. Of those who followed him to his last resting-place history's page is a blank. One name and only one shines bright as the fluttering wings of a guardian angel, for surely Herluin must have been beside his sacred charge.

The sound of trumpets, sanctifying the dirge—the hosts of following courtiers, prelates, sons—where were they? William on his last voyage was as lonely as he had been in his life. His true escort were his sorrowing people who knew now, had they never hitherto reckoned up their debts to him who was floating silently, motionless, and still forever, down the great river, before their straining eyes, to the open grave at Caen—they knew now the friend and ruler they had lost.

The activity of William's genius, the fertility of power in him, the very wildness that had been trans-

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mitted to him by his viking ancestors—being a wildness his grave character had governed to help him surmount all but insurmountable obstacles—all these greater manifestations of the forces of William's character had probably made men fear him, dread him, envy him more than they had loved him. History, as have Normandy and England, has done him justice. He whose sentiments of justice, of humanity, were far beyond his age and time, who, harsh, terrible as he could show himself to those who betrayed him or who had wronged him, "became another man, was gracious and easy of speech" with his two beloved "holy men"—with Anselm and Lanfranc.

If the spirit which is said by certain occultists to hover over the body until it be laid at rest fluttered above the great Norman who was passing, as it were, in review the sites and lands he had made literally to blossom like the rose, surely that disembodied spirit must have had the clearer vision vouchsafed the soul when it takes its first immortal flight. Above the lispig river, louder than the prayers and chanted hymns of the people, the hovering spirit must have whispered, "I may have sinned, but I have bettered, I have not wronged, the world."

CHAPTER XXIV

ON THE ROAD TO AMIENS

I

WE were looking down on a part of the Normandy world William the Conqueror "had bettered." It was such a prospect as might have moved even a small-souled monarch to thrill with a sense of possessorship, and to resolve to rule it with wisdom, and to beautify it with loving care.

Our road to Amiens and to the battlefields led us up the steep hills to the north of Rouen.

The vast outlook over the city, over the towering hills, over the serpentining Seine, its islands and the distant fields, presented another of those surprises France holds as one of the chief secrets of her compelling, mysterious charm.

This France of many faces wore here as changed an aspect as though a frontier had been passed. Breadth, grandeur, contrasting shapes of hills, a wondrous city set like a jewel in among her forested mountains—where match the splendor of this Norman prospect? Florence, from the heights of Fiesole, has certain features in common with this, our last vision of the city of churches and its encompassing

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hills. But this northern earth has more rugged, irruptive outlines, as it climbs skyward; the contrasting greens are deeper, and the ever-flashing sparklets of silvery lights one misses in the Florentine ensemble.

There was one last, lingering look over the city, swimming as in a tinted lake in the early summer-morning mist; the sun-rays were gilding the worn gray towers and the great roof of the monster cathedral; its central spire pierced the blue like an arrow flashed skyward.

Earth took up the poem man had written in carven stone to lift heavenward its own beauties. The sky was fretted by the wavering, undulating lines of the blues, greens, or pale yellows of the surrounding hills.

It was the Seine, however, which eyes and thoughts followed with even more poignant regret than the Pilgrim's Hill of Bon-Secours, just opposite, or the forests, or the wakening city.

The river had yielded up its secret; we had learned its story; and remembrance flew far afield as we realized its meaning to us, to France, and to the world.

Even as the river was lighted by sudden sunbursts, its waters sparkling with flashes of prismatic light, or was clouded to dim grays by a passing cloud, so did the Seine's historic past, its two thousand years of troubled life, seem to be imaged for us on the face of its waters.

We were leaving this prosperous, untouched France behind. We were to be within a few short

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hours in the country German barbarism had wrecked, had seemingly ruined beyond repair.

And that sparkling river seemed to send us a message. It was as though the voice of France itself spoke—through this, her liquid voice:

“Look upon all I have been, all I have achieved. See what a magnificent page I have written, even here on the shores of my great river. Remember all I have endured, suffered, conquered, and outlived. Neither savage invasions, nor foreign conquests, nor battles, nor sieges, nor even wars of inimical religions could subdue nor could they destroy my people.

“How many times, in these two thousand years of life, have I risen, again and again, to prove the vitality of my race!

“The spirit that survived the Roman conquest, that subdued the piratical Normans and made them great and French; the heroism that swept on from the Crusades to the fallen heroes of Agincourt and Crécy to inflame my soldiers to endure a Hundred Years’ War, and that burst with fullest glory in the two battles of the Marne—this is the spirit that is France. It is the unquenchable flame that lights the soul of Frenchmen.

“Even as I, the Seine, carry along to the seas the riches of art, of the architectural triumphs that star my shores, from the grandeur at Paris that is Notre-Dame to the chiseled laces of St.-Maclou and the Caudebec or Harfleur’s later Gothic; as I show plowed fields, rich orchards, and châteaux set in their midst, that have outlived wars and sieges,

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so you will see France sending forth again to the world her treasured cargoes of new thought, of fresh endeavor, scattering that generous seed of her genius which fertilizes and recreates.

"Therefore help me to long life, for I am one of the lantern-bearers of the world."

It was such voices I heard, ringing in my ears, a soft, sibilant murmur, as the city faded into her mists and as the hills melted into vapor.

Once out on the smooth, winding road leading to Amiens, another world and a different sky announced the north. Pines, spruce-trees, and larches spread their sharp needles or drooped their pendent boughs. The fields wore deeper tones; the farms were built of brick, cement, or stone. A thatched roof became as novel a sight as would have been the softer colors of the Normandy landscape; these had been succeeded by ruddier planes of contrasting hues.

The skies, as we were swept on and on, recalled the skies of Hobbema or of Coypel. Thick, compact mounds of snowy clouds moved like battalions across the colder blues, blues that were at once deeper in tone, more solid than the Norman vault.

There seemed a greater space between farmlands, with villages more tightly grouped. The Seine orchards had given place to great stretches of tilled fields; the golden grain in some of these was already garnered; in others, the early September golden light was tinting the gilded spears of wheat to shine like a burnished diadem, its jewels set in spirals.

Nearing the war zone, one's eyes were stretched

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to see the first trench, the earliest sign of the great conflict. But green or pale-gold fields succeeded groups of thickly set trees, of farms closer and closer in touch, and all that the nobly modeled landscape spelled for our eager, curious eyes was but striving industry and the calm of settled peace.

II

Suddenly, we were sweeping along a wide and dusty thoroughfare. A group of shattered houses, houses with walls mostly in their cellars, houses with roofs sagging helplessly into what once were bedrooms, a *salon*, or a boudoir, houses that had the dissolute air of having gone to pieces and making no sort of effort to regain stability—since wrecks they were and wrecks they must remain! Yes, this was the war zone in very truth!

We were in Amiens.

There could be no misreading the staring signs. There were more and more ruined dwellings. The side-streets were still cluttered with *débris*, with fallen masonry, with split bricks, and with masses of cement turned sallow by rain and weather.

On the walls of the city, as we made further progress, as on a tragic page, there were still written, in blazing letters, the records of Amiens's historic agony.

"*Abri pour 50—Abri pour 150—Abri pour 30.*"
("Shelter for 50—shelter for 150—shelter for 30.")
These words, printed or written in large letters, on bits of coarse paper, pasted on a door-jamb or on a

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house wall—here were the grim reminders of Amiens's sufferings and of the courageous stand taken by many of her citizens when the city was under the fire of the German guns.

When that swift onrush—swift as breaking dawn, destructive as some elemental, cataclysmic force—when the German army swept across the open country of Champagne and Picardy, on March 21, 1918, and von Hutier's army came to a halt but a few kilometers from Amiens, the lovely city became the favorite target for the play of the enemy fire.

Amiens, thereafter, for long weeks, was bombarded night and day. When the guns were not directing their attacks on houses or churches or civic buildings, German avions swooped and swirled up among the star-dusted skies. Aviators sent their bombs and incendiary torpedoes to flash their destructive fires on defenseless dwellings and on architectural masterpieces that were the pride not alone of Amiens itself, not alone of France, but of every living man born of woman, since in such achievements man had proved to what a height human genius could soar.

Amiens took the tragedy of her punishment for being a coveted center, as Paris, her co-sufferer, was taking hers. At first, Picardy's former capital's courageous citizens resisted, set their teeth, and sent their women and children to the cellars, to which, in time, all must go.

Even for the bravest the incessant bombing became, for many, too great a strain.

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Day after day, thereafter, was formed that other, the most pathetic of all the armies—the army of the refugees. Out from burning houses, from wretched homes, from homes that were still intact—but for how long?—old men, women, and children took the loneliest, the longest of all roads—the one that led to exile.

Weary and hungered, bereft of all hope were those who, after endless days and nights, in crowded trains, in cold and cheerless stations, finally reached Rouen or Paris or lower Normandy.

Even should a Frenchman voluntarily exile himself, even such a one can at best but stifle the breaking sob as he looks his last on "*La douce France*."

For those involuntarily ex-patriots who, at a few short hours', in many cases at even a few minutes', notice, must leave behind every dear and cherished household good and god—who, as they fly, have seen their home in flames, their dear ones, perhaps, either maimed or killed—for such as these, what heart-tearing anguish must rend the soul, making the mind a very tabernacle of agonized remembrance.

A certain chorus—the chorus of the disconsolate—rose up from many of the wayside *gares*, from Rouen stations, and others. Those of us who heard that mounting wail can liken it only to the dread voices of anguish Dante heard when he listened to the cries of the damned in hell.

For these refugees, in this, their prolonged chorus of sobbing, were burying their dead. All those years of toil, of hard, silent, patient labor, of the laying

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of one sou on another, had meant as the promised recompense for later years of ease and comfort, all this garnered spoil of the long years that had been stored in the humble, but cozy Amiens home, was but débris now. These trophies of the hard-won success of the poorer ones, as were the richer goods and chattels and the costless souvenirs of the wealthier expatriates, were now all one with splintered bricks and pulverized mortar.

As we swept past those wretched Amiens houses the echo of that chorus of the disconsolate rang in my ears; the picture was again set before eyes that were blurred with a mist—the picture of the bowed forms, of the bent faces, down whose shrunken cheeks tears were falling like rain, as the choking sobs gathered in volume till the very air vibrated with the rhythmic beat of that unbearable sorrow.

III

There came the crashing music of a military band; drums were beating their loudest; there was the metallic clashing of cymbals, the tenor notes of sonorous flutes, and soaring above the tumult of sound one heard the brassy notes of loud-voiced trumpets.

An English regiment, headed by the gorgeously uniformed bandmaster, who was executing his acrobatic fantastic tricks with his drumstick, was marching to the Amiens station, homeward bound.

The blaze of this music filled the street. We

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were to hear its feebler echo in the hotel garden where English officers were lolling in wicker chairs. A tall Pole, with his orderly, whose eyes were following every motion of his superior officer with the look of consecrated devotion that has died in the eyes of the serving class; two Serbs, in their dark grays; American Red Cross officers, some with strings of medals attesting their work in foreign missions; and half a dozen ladies with their daughters and children, filled the seats grouped about the tea-tables.

Above the clink of spoons and the more delicate clash of the teacups one heard that curious medley, that mingling of many tongues grown as familiar in all parts of the world as once foreigners were considered to be true curiosities.

Amiens, nearly a year after the armistice, was still the crowded city of congested traffic. The streets were full of dusty carts and mud-stained camions; the sidewalks were crowded with soldiers, with Y. M. C. A. men and women, with the heavier Dutch or Flemish faces, and with here and there a bearded Russian, in his blouse. Also here and there a French officer or a *poilu* maneuvered through the crowded thoroughfare to remind one Amiens was still a French city, though thus invaded by this flood of foreign allies.

IV

The Amiens I had embalmed as among the treasured cities of unforgettable, of delectable, memories was the Amiens of pre-war days.

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The Amiens of that time was the city of an ineffable charm, aureoled in beauty and romance. It was the city of the great cathedral and of Puvis de Chavannes.

This Amiens was a city of calm aspect, of quiet streets, and of a parochial air that was at once replete with dignity and was possessed of a certain air of aristocratic reserve.

One's feet led one as instinctively to the cathedral as to a shrine—for shrine it was and is such doubly now, since, with Rheims gone, the mutilated victim of German barbarism, the glory of Gothic art in France centers in Chartres and Amiens.

You will go to your guide-books, or to more elaborate and learned treatises on the glory that still is the glory of Amiens cathedral to spell out the history, and, if possible, to evoke the spiritual significance of as wondrous a human achievement as is this triumph of architectural beauty. You will be caught in a maze of wonder at the elaborate variety of the traceries, at the mingled strength and yet alluring delicacy of all lines in the columns, in the fine triforium, and in the soaring height of the great nave, the latter surpassed only by that of the Beauvais cathedral. You will wander in delighted rapture from the famous choir-stalls, with their surpassingly beautiful carven figures, to the finely wrought iron altar-screens, and again and yet again you will wish to study the treasures of sculpture in side-chapels and low doors.

In the three superb recessed porches whose crowd-

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ed figures of prophets, of saints, of wise and foolish virgins, were once gilded, or were richly painted, between the great porches, "*Le Beau Dieu d'Amiens*" looks down on the faces lifted beneath him with that detached spirituality of aspect too rarely divined by the interpreting human portraitist.

There will be hours, as there should be days, devoted to close study of all the infinite variety of design, to the scientific balance in matters of proportion and structural stability, and to the never-ending surprises yielded by the harmony of every related part in this great edifice.

There will be other moments when colors, tones, and softened lights will lure one to sit on and on. The "Wheel of Fortune," the great rose-window above the door of the south transept, will flood the gray interior with its prismatic hues. The flash and sparkle of reds, yellows, greens, and blues will touch here a gilded saint, there a richly robed virgin, whose painted face may seem endowed with a semblance of life; and if the deep organ tones should flood the aisles, and the choir-boys' voices soar in crystalline purity to break in melodic waves against the lofty vaultings of the nave, then perhaps some dim perception, in such a moment of sensuous ecstasy, since ecstasy makes for vision, of the true significance of such a cathedral as Amiens may break through the dimmed imagination of our agnostic-tainted twentieth-century souls.

We have lost the power to produce such beauty. The faith that inspired such masterpieces as these

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triumphs of Gothic architecture is as dead as are most of the lifeless gray interiors of churches and cathedrals bereft of their transfiguring stained glass, of the rich gilding, of the painted marbles, of the multitudes of statues resplendent in jeweled robes and sparkling diadems, and of altars once as incrustured with precious stones as a king's diadem.

We call the period that produced such splendor the "Middle Ages"; they were resplendent with the shining of a light that now, in our mechanical, industrial age, is a light that never shines on land or sea. We live, at times, by the flashing beams of another light; but the medieval spirituality that blossomed into beauty, into such objective, concrete expressions that proved the soul of a period—this inspirational incentive we have lost, perhaps, forever.

V

Of the harm done to the cathedral by incendiary bombs, there was abundant proof in these September days of 1919. Altars had been stripped, leaving bare the solid framework of brick or marble supports. Crippled chairs were still cluttered together; there were indistinguishable heaps of broken backs, dislocated legs, and crushed seats.

Saints and statues of the Virgin were in strange surroundings; planted in the midst of sand-bags and gilt cornices or bits of sculpture, they had the distressed air of having lost their way, of being abandoned by man and Heaven. The costly tapes-

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tries, the pictures ornamenting side-chapels, the precious stained-glass windows, the more famous statues, had long since been taken away, stored in places insuring protection from bomb destructiveness or German fury of pillage. The absence of all these decorative glories gave a tragic look of desertion, of abandonment, to the great interior.

And yet the noble edifice still held within its massive frame the spirit of France. "A thousand memories of English history are bound up with those of France," wrote Mr. Gibbs, in his admirable account of Amiens, in the days when the city's fate hung in the balance. "Beneath these very arches Edward III strode with his crown on his head, with his sword at his side, his gilded spurs on his heel, and, claiming the kingdom of France, began the Hundred Years' War. Henry V leaned against one of those very pillars as he whispered to his queen, 'Dame, Katherine!'"

Apart from its historic cathedral, Amiens has had its epoch-making records of historic interest. Cæsar, who captured everything but the gift of long life, conquered what two thousand years ago was known as the town of the Ambiani. These were fluctuating periods when Amiens was owned by the Duke of Burgundy, only to be returned to France by Louis XI; and later, the Spaniards came to find their prize wrenched from them by the gallant Frenchman who, once king of France as Henri IV, must have all France for Frenchmen. The famous Peace of Amiens, concluded in 1802 between France, Great

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Britain, Spain, and Holland, was a peace as long as Napoleon was at war.

The Germans once were able to enter the city, in November, 1870, after their first battle of Amiens, preceding by fifty years the second battle of Amiens, which was to prove the beginning of their fall as the greatest military power ever known.

VI

The true romance of Amiens I found to be the story of the remarkable relations that existed, for a long period of years, between Amiens and Puvis de Chavannes. It is such a page as one reads in the lives of the Renaissance painters and artists, when genius found itself linked with wealth and magnificence, in those days when great princes glorified themselves in their glorifying art, and, incidentally, unknowingly, assured themselves an immortality their own deeds would, perhaps, never have won them.

In Amiens, the princes who first discerned in Puvis de Chavannes the genius that was to add a new and glorious star to the constellation of French art were princes of industry.

Certain of the great merchants of Amiens were the first among connoisseurs to recognize the elements of greatness in the painter's work. They bought for the Amiens museum his "Work" and "Repose."

Up to this moment Puvis de Chavannes had worked practically in secret, unappreciated, his work

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almost unknown. In his earlier days he had followed the great army of his predecessors along the "broad highway of the Renaissance"; he had "passed through" Coutures's atelier. Then, not finding in these directions the path that suited his creative powers, he turned to tread the lonely path of original discovery.

For years Puvis suffered the slings and arrows of that outrageous fortune hostile and jealous criticism metes out to all daring and original creators. His work was laughed at, held up to contemptuous ridicule, disowned as having the right to call itself a branch of French art.

Silently, steadfastly, Puvis held to the rock of his conviction, to truth as he saw it and felt it, and to the intuitive sense and enlightened knowledge that inspired him to treat mural painting as only Giotto had conceived it.

After these years of struggle and obscurity to find in the comprehending merchants of Amiens generous patrons, this intelligent recognition so elated Puvis that the painter, in his own large-hearted way, insisted on giving two of his already completed works to the museum.

This fortunate purchase of the first two paintings sold to the Amiens museum had two far-reaching results: its effect on decorative art not alone on France, but on the future of all mural work, since Puvis's creations were to develop an entirely new school of mural painting adapted to architecture was, of course, the greater, the incalculably endur-

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able result; but on the life and methods of work of the painter himself the sale of his pictures had a most lasting influence.

Amiens adopted Puvis as its most cherished son. The city took the painter to its heart, showering upon him its love, admiration, and tender appreciation. Other great works were ordered, and Puvis was given time, leisure, and every facility to produce his masterpieces.

Puvis responded to this touching proof of a great city's affection by making it his home for seventeen years. As fame and fortune came following fast, the great painter remained true to those who first had proved worthy of his gratitude. Away from Paris, its distractions and interruptions, in his quiet Amiens house and in his great studio, the painter could develop his poetic designs, he could invite his genius to reveal her secrets in the calm of undisturbed inspiration.

In the Amiens museum there are walls covered with some of the greatest of the paintings of the master. I hold it indeed as a proof of those who "know" Puvis that they have also known the painter's work at Amiens. If, as Puvis is reputed to have said of the mural decorations in the Panthéon at Paris, that he wished them to be "*Mon Testament*," his Amiens pictures should be considered as another "legacy" to France.

In the museum itself the painter was given, as it were, a free hand. Much of the taste displayed in the manner of arranging of the many works of art,

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the very hangings of draperies at the doors, prove the decorative talent of those who beautify all they touch.

In this Amiens museum, Puvis de Chavannes seems to have left a faint reflection of the smile—of that kindly, comprehending smile, that faded only when his wife, the Princess Cantacuzene, died.

With her death, the lover and husband felt the light gone out of life. A few months later, "Leave me," the painter whispered to those about him. He must meet the great silence as, in the early years, he had lived it—alone.

CHAPTER XXV

ON THE ROAD TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

I

IF, in that September of 1919, nearly a year after the armistice, we entered Amiens to find the city repeopled, its streets thronged with men, its shops gay with merchandise, yet there were its wrecked houses, its mutilated churches, and the great roof of the cathedral open to the sky—the opening made by descending bombs, to prove the long martyrdom of Picardy's former capital.

The battle of Amiens is now a part of the history of the great war. But already, so swift is the finger of time to obliterate the writing on the scroll of memory, many of the main outlines of the great struggle are dimmed, have become indistinct, and are merged in the ensemble of the tremendous conflict that lasted nearly five years.

The chief, indeed the imperative, reason for beginning one's tour of the battlefields at Amiens and its adjacent towns—or what is left of them—lies in the pregnant fact that at Hamel, at Villers-Bretonneux close to the city, some of our own American troops had there their first baptism of fire; and that

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their superb fighting qualities in these battles were first demonstrated not only to their amazed and admiring allies, but as well to the incredulous and contemptuous Germans.

The road from Amiens to Villers-Bretonneux is one long record of the bitter battles fought for the possession of Amiens by the German armies, and of the Spartan courage of the Allied forces in defending the city.

No sooner is one out of Amiens than the tragic signs confront us with what modern warfare can write on a lovely landscape, utterly to change and disfigure its beauty and productiveness. One seems to have been plunged into the very heart of the conflict. Tanks with broken bodies half buried in mud; miles and miles of barbed wires, zigzagging in apparently irresolute lines across what once were fields and groves of trees; trees the very skeleton of their former shape and foliated beauty, whose bare eccentric branches stretched in seeming human agony against the soft September skies, appear to call on heaven itself to witness the horror of their nudity and disfigurement; and, as far as the eye can reach across the now recaptured green of earth's fecundity, twisting, turning, slanting downward into the very bowels of the earth, coiling in serpentine twists, were the trenches. Miles and miles of them stretched across plains, fields, ran up the hills, only to run down again; some so close together they seem to be competing in a race for space; some still yawning deeply, plunging earthward, now, with a year of

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mud and rain filling the crevices, to give an objective reminder of the beds and living they offered to millions of shivering soldiers.

The long lines of streaking whites that traversed the fields were the trenches already filled in, the chalk of the subsoil having been so mixed with earth as to stain it a roughened, snowy purity.

Near and beyond Hamel the ground was so laced with these whitened lines that for a plow to pass between would have been as difficult as for the legendary camel to pass through the eye of the equally legendary needle.

Every sign of war, every horror that could mark a recent battlefield, every tortured form of tree or wrecked house, or burnt village—all of these one sees as one passes along the road that leads one to Villers-Bretonneux, to Hamel, to Albert, to Bapaume, to Péronne, or to Arras.

You may sup on horrors and take your fill of the terrorizing proofs of what man can endure, and of what man, returned to savagery, can inflict.

II

In this journey, for the purpose of looking upon the battlefields that surround Amiens, two experiences stand out with peculiar, impressive significance.

On the road to Villers-Bretonneux there suddenly appeared a group of American soldiers. Several camions were alined close to the left of the road. At the open end of these camions stood several of

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the men. Across the fields, close to the roadside, were deep excavations where soldiers were busily shoveling the earth into mounds, to free these oblong holes in the ground.

Strange-looking packages, cased in brown sacking, were carefully lifted from these tomblike openings. With equal care the bundles were conveyed to the camions. There the men awaiting these gruesome-looking objects as painstakingly lifted each one into the camions' interior, laying one on top of the other in neat piles.

There were few words interchanged between the men. There was some checked laughter, some whistling arrested, as our car drew near and came to a stop.

With the genial friendliness so delightfully American, several of the men came forward.

To our rapid questioning, one tall Texan replied, with unembarrassed ease, and in the tone of "it's all a matter of business":

"Why, marm, we're just taking some of our boys, who dropped hereabouts, and were buried in this 'ere plot. We're to take 'em over yonder, to the big burying-ground."

"There—you can see it—that white spot shining above Villers-Bretonneux," interrupted a fair-faced boy. He pointed to an indistinct mass of hilly ground above what once was the busy town of Villers-Bretonneux.

The matter-of-fact acceptance of these devoted men in a reburial of our heroes could not inoculate

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our less hardened sensibilities with their own phlegm. We had not covenanted for this gruesome spectacle in our adventure into battle-land.

The remembrance of those unearthed, long, brown bundles haunted us, rose up before every green bit of unharmed field, were a ghostly company that pursued us unrelentingly, until other ghosts, of a fate as cruel, confronted us, made our hearts melt in pity, and made death itself seem less the sad end of a chapter that was a stricken, mutilated city.

For Villers-Bretonneux was in ruins. Its houses lay in broken bits of brick and plaster on every side. Streets must be guessed at, and for a car to make its way through the piled-up masses of *débris* was the feat only of an expert driver.

An English flag, a group of tents, and some tall, shapely men in khaki lured us to seek a sure refuge. A unit of the Australian Y. M. C. A. was still on duty. Its most obvious duty appeared, on the instant of our arrival, to give us an English welcome. None of the returned refugees to this ruined town could have been more grateful than were we for the warmth of the brightly lit stoves, for the steaming-hot coffee, for the delicious loaves of white bread, and for the English cigarette and the sound of the English voices.

Commenting on the martyrdom of the town, "Oh, there are plenty of people about; they're all comin' back; they'll soon have it cleared up; they're as glad to get back as are we to go home," was the cheerful response. Our new friend was seated on

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the edge of the nearest table, his long legs were dangling, his hat was at the true Australian angle, and his smile was as broad as was his accent.

An hour later, with a half-dozen of these vigorous young giants as escort, we made the tour of what was once a town. We did better than merely to mourn and grieve and marvel over the completeness of the destruction of Villers-Bretonneux. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago had given me that which opened to me what might have been every door, but was commonly merely a yawning hole in a crumbling wall, which made every face that came forth to gape and gaze and finally to blaze with surprised delight that of a grateful friend, as garments, hoods, boots, and clothing for young and old were showered to the outstretched hands.

There were no people in town? Every cellar, each bit of still standing wall or roof that yielded semblance of a possible shelter, rooms that had been built with *tôle* for roofs, and windows that had oiled paper for glass—from cellars, crumbling interiors, and cavernous abodes—there rose up a small army of returned refugees. The cries of joy, the happy laughter, the glad shouts of the children, the continued chorus of grateful thanks from the men and women, were like unto a chant, one that seemed to mock the ruins and to defy the fates.

Women left their kettles, the latter hung, gipsy-fashion, over three bits of iron, beneath which burned feebly an uncertain fire; children were extricated

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from perilous adventures amid mounds of mortar and cement; babes at the breast found the maternal fount temporarily removed, that women, children, and nursing infants might each have their share of "*les doux Américains*."

To see them re-enter their dilapidated dwellings; to look upon them crawling into dark cellars, into holes in crumbling walls, with faces irradiate with the delight born of the possession of warm clothing and some bags of food, was to learn the true meaning of the words "*le pays*."

Villers-Bretonneux in ruins was still home. Cold, hunger, discomfort, poverty, and surrounding desolation could be endured with Spartan courage, since these citizens were "*chez eux*."

There is no killing a people cuirassed with such virtues, with such a love of country, of *their own particular bit of country*. This is the "country" the Frenchman toils to inhabit, fights for, and returns to work for and rebuild.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE BATTLE OF AMIENS

I

THE imperative reason for beginning one's tour of the battlefields in and about Amiens is found in the fact that the battle of Amiens was the turning of the tide in the fortunes of the Allied armies in 1918—a victory our American forces helped to win.

Who can forget the growing horror that possessed the civilized world as the Germans began their audacious offensive on March 21, 1918? Who that lived through those four days of gathering terror can fail to measure every other dread as puerile compared to the marching on and on of that seemingly irresistible force of the German army?

The battle that was to be the decisive battle of the war was prepared with a care and precision, its initial advance was executed with a secrecy and skill, that warranted the German boast that this was to be "The Storm of Peace." It was to be, indeed, "The Peace Offensive."

Two hundred and eight divisions were assembled under cover of long nights of silent, soundless marches. The attack was opened by the belching

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forth along a front of sixty miles and to a depth of twelve miles of a vast sea of gas projected by toxic obus (*obus toxique*) hours before dawn. General Gough's Fifth English Army was entirely submerged by that poisonous attack. Telephone liaisons were cut, the smoke of the mounting waves of gas made optical telegraphy impossible. The utmost confusion and panic ensued. Almost immediately following the deadening gas attack the German infantry poured over the top, rushing the English first line and destroying, as they swept onward, thousands of soldiers with their *Minenwerfer*.

In the incredibly short space of four hours from the moment of attack, so great had been the surprise, that Gough's first line of defenses was either entirely destroyed or was rendered completely useless.

By nine o'clock the Germans were masters of their positions. They were entering the open country. They had pierced the English front and the rout of General Gough's Fifth Army was complete. How could fourteen divisions hold against the thirty divisions of General von Hutier's army and the ten divisions of General von der Marwitz?

On and on the Germans swept in their triumphant march. Champagne and Picardy were overrun in four short days' time. This time the triumphant German cry, "*Nach Paris!*" reverberated to inflate the German hopes to the giddy certainty of quick triumph.

In these four short days the most masterly German military feat of the long war had brought their forces

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a distance of one hundred and twenty-five kilometers, almost to their objective—to Amiens.

The Germans were once more in the “heart of France.” And the heart of the world seemed to stand still, to lose its beat. For were Amiens to fall, what hope was there for Paris—for Calais?

The design of the audacious enemy offensive had for its chief purpose the cutting of the lines of communication between the French and the English lines.

It is to the immortal honor of General Haig that, seeing this appalling peril, conscious of its imminent accomplishment, he should have acted with the despatch and energy of a born commander.

Under the dome of the great hall in which L'Académie Française holds its meetings, not many days ago, President Poincaré, in impassioned eloquence and in classic phrase, set for us the moving scene that resulted from General Haig's quick action. The President of the French Republic was the speaker designated to respond to the speech made by Maréchal Foch, on the occasion of the Maréchal's reception as a member of the Forty Immortals.

The all but fatal situation of the Allied cause was thus graphically set forth:

“Ham, Péronne have fallen; Noyon is on the eve of being taken; the enemy is marching toward Montdidier to open the road to Amiens and to cut the communications between us and the English. The peril is so great that the French General-in-

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Chief, doubtful of being able to keep in touch with the Allies, whose retreat continues, gives instructions to his lieutenants which foreshadow a fatal separation. General Haig writes from Abbeville that the eventual break between the English and French armies is only a question of time. Thus for want of a supreme command and of a controlling will the French army will doubtless be forced to diverge toward the south and the English army to retreat toward its base on the Channel. In a very brief space of time the catastrophe will have happened.

“General Haig saw the danger and telegraphed to the head of the British headquarters to beg of him to come to France with a member of the English Cabinet, and to ask for the naming of a supreme command. Lord Milner and General Wilson arrived on the 25th [March]”—five days after the Germans had started their offensive.

On the same day the President went on to say that he and Monsieur Clemenceau, with Lord Milner and General Wilson, went on to Compiègne to meet General Pétain, “and we all agreed on a rendezvous for the morrow at Soullens, where we should meet General Haig.”

Of that eventful and historic meeting at Soullens, President Poincaré presented a moving and brilliantly realistic picture.

“Beyond Amiens the roads were filled with English troops already marching north against the bitter March wind that stings their faces. When we leave our carriage General Haig is still conferring with his

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army commanders. In order not to interrupt him, we walk up and down the little square of the Hôtel de Ville for more than an hour. . . . We mount at last up to the great Hall of the Mairie, and there a conference is held which throws light on the perfect concord existing between the two governments, and also the patriotic disinterestedness of General Haig and General Pétain."

The result of the meeting was the unanimous consent of the governments to hand over to General Foch the co-ordinating of the action of the Allied armies on the western front. In early April the general received the supreme command.

Such was the gift the Germans gave to the Allied cause! Territory, loot, plunder, guns, prisoners by the thousands—the Germans had won all of these in their triumphant march in four short days across 125 kilometers of open country.

It was reserved for that dynamic force we know as Maréchal Foch, for that power crowned with the triple crown of intellectual, spiritual, and military genius, to forge a stupendous victory out of what seemed to presage the crushing defeat of Allied hopes.

II

In the months that followed, Amiens must wait until the early days of August to be freed from the dread of enemy capture.

With the fall of Montdidier, the railway connecting Paris and Amiens had been cut—a serious blow to

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both English and French maneuvers, and to their communicating lines of resources and munitions.

In early April, however, Foch's masterly leadership begins to prove its genius. With Haig, Pétain, and Fayolle, a superb counter-offensive saves the French coast. The many attacks on Rheims and Villers-Cotterets fail. The French front holds. And, later, in July, "it seems," says President Poincaré, "at last, as you expressed it, that we had arrived at one of the solemn moments where an army on the field of battle feels itself pushed onward, as though it slid along an inclined plane. . . . From the summit which we have gained we now perceive the enemy which begins to yield and the victory that calls us."

III

One of these "solemn moments" in the ascending tide of the Allied fortunes had been the surprise the American troops gave the world—as well as the amazed and incredulous Germans.

The American valor was to be triumphantly proved in the battles about Amiens. For the moment had come for Foch's great counter-offensive.

The general knew now he had the American legions behind him. He had hundreds of thousands of trained American reserves to draw on. That noble gesture of General Pershing's when, at the darkest moment of the Allied fortunes, he had rushed to General Foch's headquarters to present him with "all I have" in men and munitions, had been

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seconded by one of the most astounding military feats of organization ever performed by a nation three thousand miles away—the sending of nearly three hundred thousand troops across the ocean.

In August, therefore, Foch said, “The Entente must now strike with redoubled force.” With the Generals Haig, Rawlinson, and Debeney, the generalissimo’s first plan was to relieve Amiens and to reconquer Montdidier.

It is at Hamel, and later at Montdidier, Americans should begin the tour of inspection of this northern battlefield. For here Foch wrested the offensive from Ludendorff, here the whole German plan was upset, and in these victories the Germans suffered those first crushing defeats that led to the armistice.

At both Hamel and Montdidier the American troops in liaison with the British and French forces were to show those daring fighting qualities that were to win not only the admiration of their allies, but were to prove valor that was further to precipitate the disintegrating of the morale of the enemy and of the German civil population.

At Hamel, where Australians and Americans were brigaded together, the forces were greatly aided in their gallant attack by the tanks, whose efficiency had lately suffered an eclipse. But here, in this drive, the tanks proved to be astonishing in their facilities and methods of maneuvering, arousing the greatest enthusiasm and intensifying the confidence of the attacking troops.

Over the top and away, these “men from the

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Antipodes" carried everything before them. The objectives were reached, positions held, prisoners taken by the hundreds, and machine-guns "smashed to bits under heavy weight of metal."

Referring to these and to the later attacks along these salients, Philip Gibbs wrote:

To me and to many of us there is something that stirs us deeply, in the sight of Amiens from the fields all around that country north and south of the Somme, where the Australian and American troops are fighting. The cathedral is seen with its high roof and thin spire vague as a shadow in the sky, but splendid in the imagination of the men who have walled up its great nave and seen the glory of its sculpture.

Every few yards gained of the ground above the valley of the Somme by English or French or American troops insures the greater safety of that old city our men have learned to know and admire because of its beauty and the good life lived there.

The lovely city the Germans coveted was, however, shortly to be freed from danger of German conquest or spoliation.

On Saturday, August 10th, Montdidier fell to the French First Army. In this tremendous struggle of the Allied troops (British, Americans, Australians, and French) for the possession of this important salient, there were eight thousand prisoners taken, two hundred guns, and an enormous amount of material.

The stirring accounts given of the going into action of the Americans records one of the thrilling episodes of our army. In order to be on time to get over the top at the appointed time, the Americans made a forced march; during the last kilometers they ran. A smoke screen lifted as they went into

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action, and the Americans found themselves at once at grips with the Germans.

The fighting at Montdidier was of the most exhaustive order. The town is on a hill; the Germans were strongly intrenched, with machine-guns playing their deadly fire on the troops rushing the sides of the rising ground.

And the conquering Allies, in possession of the wrecked town (for there is no longer any town of Montdidier), the soldiers must fight the Germans in the cellars, in the attics—or such as were still standing.

This face-to-face combat was a struggle of giants. The three days' battle was one of the titanic battles of the war.

With the fall of Montdidier, Amiens's fate was secure, the Paris-Amiens railroad recaptured, Paris was saved, and the world could breathe freely again.

At Château-Thierry and the Argonne our American troops were to continue to win the laurels and to hasten the dawn of victory.

What had been accomplished by the Allied armies in less than a month was as follows:

Enemy forces numbering three hundred thousand men had been defeated and driven back in confusion; three hundred guns and hundreds of thousands of prisoners had been taken; immense booty and stores of provisions had been captured; the great railway to the north had been disengaged; and the British, French, and American forces had been welded into an unbreakable whole. . . .

Paris had been under the bombing attacks of the

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long-range German gun since March 26th; had been in its turn under fire.

American aviators had discovered its position between Ham and Guiscard, north of Noyon.

In these great battles about Amiens and Montdidier, "Foch brought the war back to the days of the great historic battles, where ability plays an essential part. A great soldier had appeared at last, and once more the battlefields of Europe are swayed under the spell of genius."

As Xerxes sat on his golden throne to watch the disaster of Salamis, so the German Emperor had sat, placed where he might best note what were to have been the triumphs of his "Friedersturm."

But it was his downfall and not "world power" to which mistaken German military councils were to lead. The Imperial Command had headed straight for military defeat and the suicide of the Hohenzollern dynasty.

The great day broke on November 8th. The Germans, sooner than meet the fate of being strangled on the Meuse, unable to reach Germany, "there was no other issue than a capitulation in open country."

And thus ended the greatest war in history. Maréchal Foch had added to "all the glories of France"—"*à toutes les gloires de la France*"—that of having saved the most sacred of all—that of civilization and the liberty of the world.

THE END

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